

THE DALLAS COUNTY CHRONICLE

Commissioner Profiles

Joan Jackson Bouldin

Joan Jackson Bouldin was appointed to the Dallas County Historical Commission by Commissioner Theresa Daniel, District 1 in 2022. A lifelong Dallas resident, her early years were spent in the Oak Cliff area now referred to as the Tenth Street Historic District and The Bottom. She attended Immaculate Heart of Mary, N.W. Harlee, FD Roosevelt and graduated from South Oak Cliff High School in 1970. The family's home church, Golden Gate Missionary Baptist Church, began in 1930 and still serves the neighborhood. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees from Our Lady of The Lake University in San Antonio, Texas.



"I remember growing up in a vibrant, supportive neighborhood that had Black owned businesses and services. There was a shopping area at E. 8th Street and N. Moore Street. We called the shopping strip "The Show Hill", because that's where the Star Movie Theater was located (1945-1959). In addition, there were restaurants, grocery stores, churches and other businesses that supported the community." Joan remembers many pivotal events in Dallas history, such as attending the parade for President Kennedy in 1963. "After the parade passed my siblings and I, we boarded the Moore Street bus. News of the shooting of the President could be heard from the bus driver's radio. Much of my schooling coincided with the slow, "Stairstep Integration Plan" of Dallas Independent School District (1961-1967). In the summer of 1973, I attended the march in downtown Dallas following the police shooting of Santos Rodriguez."

She was influenced by her family's efforts of community involvement and political activism. "My mother had a barber shop on The Show Hill. She worked with Julia Scott Reed, the first Black columnist at the Dallas Morning News, and others collecting poll taxes. There was a miniature voting machine at the barber shop to show customers how to vote. I thought it was a toy and enjoyed moving the levers up and down. My older sisters were members of the NAACP Youth Council which was led by Juanita Craft." In the 1960s, members of the Youth Council staged boycotts of the State Fair to end discrimination.

(Continued on page 2)

CONTENTS

- Commissioner Profiles - 1
- 60 Years of Scrutiny - 3
- Insulator Collecting. - 6

DALLAS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEMBERS

Elizabeth Gunby, Chair, *Dallas*
 Patricia Hicks, Vice Chair, *Dallas*
 Joan E. Jackson Bouldin, *Dallas*
 Anthony A Cornell, Sr. *Dallas*
 Elizabeth De Leon, *Dallas*
 Priscilla Escobedo, *Irving*
 Cheryl Jackson, *Lancaster*
 Jearlene Miller, *Irving*
 Roosevelt Nichols, *Lancaster*
 Coy L. Poitier, *Dallas*
 John Roppolo, *Carrollton*

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

December 20th, 2023

SUBSCRIBE TO THE DCHC NEWSLETTER
 SCANNING THE QR CODE WITH YOUR MOBILE
 DEVICE.



Commissioner Profiles (Continued)

Joan retired from the Dallas Independent School District in 2016 as a researcher and an assessment specialist. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., The Association for the Study of African American Life and History, a volunteer for the African American Museum, and a Dallas County Precinct Chair.

“Being a member of the Dallas County Historical Commission is an opportunity to serve the community and to apply my skills as an amateur historian. I hope that through the Historical Commission, I can tell the under told and forgotten stories of people and places in the African American community.”

Cheryl A. Jackson

Cheryl A. Jackson is a retired educator, mentor, advocate for children, and entrepreneur. During the pandemic she started her balloon art business, which started out of her desire to make people happy and balloons can always put a smile on your face. She has been featured on Fox 4 News six times for her holiday yard art.



She was recently appointed to a two-year term to the Dallas County Historical Commission under Commissioner John Wiley Price and a two-year term with the Lancaster Historical Museum Board where she serves as the Chairperson. While in graduate school, she created an organization called “V.E.N.T.”- Voicing Everyone’s Needs Together. The goal of the organization is to help young women identify obstacles that may prevent them from achieving their goals.

Cheryl is married with two sons and four grandchildren. She currently lives in Lancaster, Texas; she & her husband Charles are snowbirds that split their time in Seattle, Washington. She attends the “Exciting” Singing Hills Baptist Church. Cheryl A. Jackson holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology from Texas Woman’s University and a Masters degree in counseling from Prairie View A&M University.

**60 YEARS OF SCRUTINY
GENERATIONS OF TRAVELERS
REMEMBER, GRIEVE, AND QUESTION IN DALLAS**
by Andy Rhodes, Managing Editor, The Medallion

This excerpt is taken from an article published by the Texas Historical Commission in their publication, The Medallion, from their Fall 2023 special issue. If readers would like to read the original article in its entirety, it can be found at www.THC.Texas.gov.

It wasn't long ago that most people had a ready answer for the notorious question, "Where were you on November 22, 1963?" Now, 60 years later, there's only a portion of the population with a definitive response. In 1970s Dallas, however, the question was still on everyone's mind. And it certainly was a provocative query for the Dallas County Historical Foundation. The county cautiously approached the imposing prospect of acquiring the former Texas School Book Depository Building at Dealey Plaza and opening a temporary exhibit about the shocking assassination of President John F. Kennedy that occurred there. "I think it was done with great reluctance, but with the understanding that it was the right thing to do," says Nicola Longford, CEO of the Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza. "So many people were coming here,



and there was no historical interpretation or any official tour or guidelines to help people understand what had happened." After moving into the building and occupying the first five floors with administrative offices and a courtroom, the county spent nearly a decade carefully planning the permanent institution that became the Sixth Floor Museum. It officially opened on February 20, 1989—President's Day—and proved to be a nerve-wracking experience for everyone involved. "Dallas had been in a difficult position for many years as it managed the aftermath of being the place where the president was killed. It was labeled the City of Hate, and it still carried all those stigmas," Longford says. "But Dallas rallied together and moved onward. There may still be a little residual feeling here, but it's a great city and all the pioneers who contributed to the founding of the museum should be recognized."

She adds that the museum has been following its original mission to present facts and allow visitors to decide for themselves about the motives and consequences of the events of November 1963. Although the museum acknowledges conspiracy theories "and other tangential parts of this very complicated story," administrators take pride in their extensive collection of oral histories, artifacts, documents, and photos that allow the public to form a deeper understanding of a very complex history. "With the passage of time, a city, a community, a nation, and a world still come back and revisit the assassination—especially when another decade goes by," Longford says. "So, the 60th anniversary is really critical for us because it may be the last time that some of the key people who are still alive can come together and remember and reflect. Those are important connections to younger audiences today." According to Longford, the museum draws both traditional visitors and an unconventional audience, including some who question facts with a determination that wasn't prevalent decades ago. "Because it's a really polarizing topic, we try and stay in the middle by sticking to what we know about the assassination and avoiding speculation," she says, adding that there are "people who don't approve or like or appreciate how we present the history" while others express gratitude for helping them find answers to long-burning questions. Longford feels strongly that regardless of the motivation of visitors, the museum continues to encourage further research and discussion about Kennedy's death, an event that shaped history from a local to international level. "It's still relevant—Kennedy is quoted almost every day or referenced in some fashion," she says. "Our visitors don't have to personally

like Kennedy, but this museum is about his presidency, his life, and his legacy. We want people to leave here knowing that it's OK to have questions, but we are not deviating from the historical facts.”

The Sixth Floor Museum is currently commemorating the 60th anniversary of Kennedy's assassination with a temporary exhibit revisiting his November 1963 Texas trip. “Two Days in Texas” traces the president's itinerary through each city on his last presidential tour, featuring original film footage, photographs, news articles, personal items, and new acquisitions. The exhibit is open through June 16, 2024.

Kennedy began his Texas visit on November 21 with appearances in San Antonio and Houston, followed by what would be his final speech at a breakfast hosted by the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce. After the assassination, two speeches planned for audiences in Dallas and Austin were left undelivered. According to Longford, “Two Days in Texas” addresses the assassination's impact on everyday Texans and how it still resonates with them 60 years later.

The exhibit features artifacts and first-hand accounts from San Antonio, Houston, Fort Worth, Dallas, and Austin. While there, visitors can also experience the museum's permanent exhibit, which remains a compelling and fascinating chronological journey through Kennedy's legacy. Many people quickly flock to the spine-chilling sniper's nest in the actual sixth-floor window where Lee Harvey Oswald fired his bolt-action rifle. But visitors should take time to view all the exhibits, featuring context-providing and insightful newspaper articles, grainy black-and-white TV newsreels, and stunning large-scale photos. To learn more about the museum and to access its impressive online collection of photos and videos, visit jfk.org.

A Texas Historical Commission (THC) Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) marker details the Book Depository's history. A block south is the handsome brick 1915 Dallas County Criminal Courts Building with terra cotta and Renaissance Revival detailing. Its RTHL marker notes it was the location of the trial for nightclub owner Jack Ruby, who killed Oswald on November 24, 1963. Oswald was in the basement of the Dallas police headquarters (nine blocks east) when Ruby appeared from the shadows and shot him with a .38-caliber Colt revolver. The 1914 Beaux Arts structure, also an RTHL, is now the Dallas Municipal Building. Back near Dealey Plaza, the somber yet impactful John F. Kennedy Memorial Plaza consists of a massive concrete cenotaph—a roofless square room with 30-foot-tall stark walls designed by noted architect Philip Johnson. He claimed the monument was a quiet refuge symbolizing the freedom of Kennedy's spirit. A few miles away, Kennedy's legacy is also honored at Parkland Memorial Hospital, where he was rushed to Trauma Room 1 after being shot and officially pronounced dead by medical staff. A memorial park on campus honors Kennedy's legacy with a reflective and peaceful space.



LEFT: The Sixth Floor Museum. The Sixth Floor Museum’s sniper’s nest. Just down the street is a THC marker chronicling the location where Oswald allegedly murdered police officer J.D. Tippit shortly after Kennedy’s assassination. He then fled several blocks west to Jefferson Avenue and the Texas Theatre, where an employee called police. Oswald was soon apprehended in the theater’s auditorium. The theater is still active. Nearby is a more obscure location appealing to visitors interested in the finer details of Oswald’s background. The Neely Street Boarding House (214 Neely St.) is where he reportedly lived in 1963 with his wife Marina.

OSWALD’S ODYSSEY - For those interested in exploring beyond the traditional Kennedy-related travel destinations, the Oak Cliff area south of downtown offers several sites appealing to visitors intrigued by Oswald’s provocative story. A good place to start is the Oswald Rooming House Museum (1026 Beckley Ave.). The site is operated by Patricia Puckett-Hall, who lived in the home (her grandmother’s) when Oswald rented a room there in November 1963. Her first-hand accounts of cohabitating with him at age 11 are admittedly surreal. “I have very fond memories of him— he was always kind, sweet, and considerate,” Puckett-Hall says. “I never saw him cooking, but that man loved his sandwiches. He ate more sandwiches than you could shake a stick at.” She adds that people from across the world visit the home in search of answers to specific questions about conspiracies or express curiosity about the man responsible for impacting the course of history. The museum is meticulously rehabilitated to the home’s 1963 appearance, and features artifacts and projected vignettes. The site’s address is kept secret, but visitors can arrange tours via irvingarchivesandmuseum.org. To learn about other heritage tourism destinations in the Dallas area, visit texasimetravel.com.



The Texas Theatre today.



The front room of the Oswald Rooming House Museum. touches like Puckett family photos, midcentury modern furnishings, and Kennedy-related documents. “People want to know what Oswald was like as a person and what I think his motivations were. I’ll talk to everyone, whatever their level of interest in his story,” Puckett-Hall says.

Historical Hobbies

The Insulator Collecting Hobby

Chris Renaudo October 22, 2023

Insulators are the devices used on telegraph, telephone, and power utility poles to prevent the electrical current from leaking to ground. They have been manufactured out of glass, porcelain, wood, rubber, plastic, and other materials. They were developed in the 1850's with the invention of the telegraph and were a prominent fixture along highways and railroad tracks as communications and power usage increased in the 1900's. Production of glass insulators ended in the mid-1970's and few companies still manufacture porcelain insulators.

Some of the earliest insulators were pottery insulators used in the United Kingdom by the Wheatstone and Cook telegraph company. These pieces are from the early to mid 1840's and have been found with four different glazes.

The world's first commercial telegraph line was developed by Samuel Morse and was successfully demonstrated in 1844 when the message "What hath God wrought" was communicated along a line using bureau knob insulators developed by Ezra Cornell.

The world of telegraphy spawned a new industry and many patents were generated boasting the most successful insulator. The earliest insulators were threadless meaning they were affixed to the communication pole with burlap and tar. The insulator below, called a pilgrim hat because of its shape, was used on the telegraph line for the Transcontinental Railroad which was completed in 1869 after being put on hold during the Civil War.



While insulator shapes are a key reason for collector value, such as the Boston Bottle Works screw top insulator above.

Threadless insulators were frequently "popping" off the pins on their distribution poles as a result of tension and weather impacts. All of this changed in 1865 when Louis Cauvet walked into the Brookfield glass office to demonstrate his threaded pin type insulator. Brookfield initially wasn't interested but quickly realized the potential that changed the insulator industry. Threaded pin type insulators became the industry standard until production ended in the 1970's as mentioned earlier.

Glass houses were in great demand to meet the expanding need for telegraph insulators and eventually telephone lines following Alexander Graham Bell's 1876 patent. Insulator patent applications were numerous for both shape, resistance pathway, shedding of water build-up and many others. Most often the color of the glass insulator was random and aqua glass remains the most common color for glass insulators. Cullet, or scrap glass, was frequently added to the glass batch which is one reason behind the numerous color variations. In addition, some telegraph or telephone companies specified a color so they could identify their lines on the communication poles. Shouldn't be too difficult to do, right? Well, looking at the photos below reveals why this would have had value at that period of time.



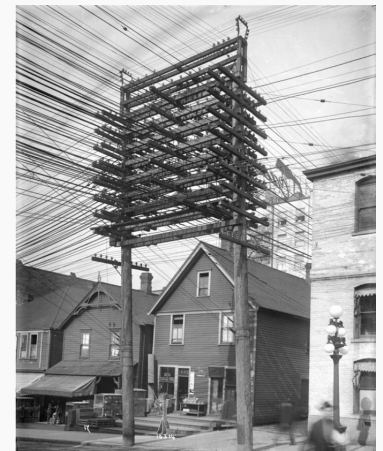
Color is king in the hobby of insulator collecting. With purple, amber, green, jade, depression glass green, yellow, peacock and cobalt blue, and many other variations the insulator collector has a wide color palette to create a fantastic display. The only color not found in commercially made insulators is red. Red glass at the time required the use of gold chloride which was a very expensive additive and made the glass cost prohibitive.

As power distribution became prevalent, porcelain became the preferred material over glass due to its ability to withstand greater voltage. Porcelain insulators can be one piece (unipart) or many pieces cemented together (multipart). Many insulator collectors have both glass and porcelain pieces in their collection while others tend to collect only one of the materials.

Glass insulator shapes are generally known amongst collectors by the “CD” numbering system. The “Consolidated Design” numbering system was created by insulator pioneer N. R. Woodward is still in use today for collectors to convey the style of glass insulator they have. Porcelain pieces are similarly numbered using “U” for unipart and “M” for multipart.

Insulator collecting is a relatively young hobby that began in the late 1960’s. Today, the hobby boasts over 3000 members nationwide and has numerous shows and conventions across the country on a weekly basis. The hobby has internet sites, such as www.insulators.info and www.nia.org which is the site for the National Insulator Association. The hobby is also active on social media with many Facebook groups and on-line auctions that are held frequently.

The next time you use your mobile phone to text, take a selfie, or actually make a call remember that the telecommunications world of today was made possible by insulators of a bygone era. And while insulators may not be considered family heirlooms, their intrinsic, utilitarian value has earned them a forever place in history as crown jewels of the wire!



Disclaimer Statement: The articles contained in this Chronicle represent the work and opinions of their authors. They do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Historical Commission or its members.