



NEWSLETTER
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The Berachah Home
Part 1: A Historical Perspective
By Lydia Brosowsky

Longtime Arlington resident Lydia Brosowsky is a nurse by vocation and a historian by avocation, earning her B.A. in history from the University of North Texas-Denton and her M.A. degree in public history from Southern New Hampshire University. She has served on the AHS board since 2018.



The history surrounding the Berachah Industrial Home for the Redemption of Erring Girls is one of Arlington's most interesting: a compelling story offering both mystery and intrigue. I first learned about the Berachah Home when a friend took me to the cemetery in Doug Russell Park. The historical marker left me wanting to know more. Fortunately, a treasure trove of information was housed just a short walk away in the main library at the University of Texas at Arlington. After my first trip to the library, I knew I found the topic for my master's thesis. Still, I had no idea how far reaching the narrative would become.

The collection at the UTA library led me to the Church of the Nazarene's archives in
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From the Editor
Denise Youngblood

This issue features articles by **Lydia Brosowsky** on the Berachah Home (p. 1), **Jannette Workman** on the 175th anniversary of Texas Annexation (p.2), and **O.K. Carter** on his "Arlington Time Capsule" video project (p. 4). Be sure to note that the Fielder House Museum is hosting an exhibit honoring the local chapter of the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution that is on view now through December 31, 2020 (p. 9).

As always your comments, suggestions, and contributions for the newsletter are welcome and may be sent to me at denise.youngblood@uvm.edu. Best wishes for the holidays!



Texas Annexation

By Jannette Workman



On December 29, 2020, Texas will celebrate 175 years since annexation, the first step toward early statehood. U.S. President James K. Polk signed the annexation legislation on December 29, 1845, making the Republic of Texas the 28th state in the Union. Texas formally relinquished its sovereignty to the United States on February 19, 1846. The United States flag was the fifth of six flags to fly over Texas.

As early as 1836, after Texas won its freedom from Mexico, Texas voters had chosen overwhelmingly to support annexation by the U.S. Many Texans expected annexation to follow within months of this vote. However, there were several ongoing issues that delayed annexation by almost a decade.

First, Texas annexation would tip the balance of free and slave states; there had been little question that if Texas joined the U.S., it would join as a slave state. Abolitionists in the U.S. worried that adding another slave-holding state would upset the political balance of power in Congress and in the country.

Second, the British were opposed to Texas annexation and in 1843 even contemplated the use of force to prevent it. They wanted to halt the westward expansion of the United States, to reap commercial advantages from Texas trade, and to weaken the American tariff system and the institution of slavery.

Third, annexation was opposed by Mexico. The border dispute between the Republic of Texas and Mexico still had not been resolved. Mexico claimed that the Nueces River marked the border between Texas and Mexico, while the Republic of Texas maintained that the Rio Grande was its southern border. Although temporarily disgraced after the Texas Revolution, Santa Anna staged a political resurrection and served as the Mexican president/dictator eleven different times. Santa Anna had proclaimed that if Texas were annexed to the U.S., Mexico would declare war on the U.S.

The outcome of Texas annexation was dramatic. Mexico did indeed declare war on the U.S., a war that became known as the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848. Because the United States won, Mexico had to give up its claim to Texas, and the Rio Grande became the official boundary between Texas and Mexico. As another result of the U.S. victory, the U.S. saw its greatest territorial expansion in the nation's history. Mexico had to cede the territories known as the Mexican Cession to the U.S., meaning that the area now comprising New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, California and western Colorado was ceded to the U.S. in 1848.

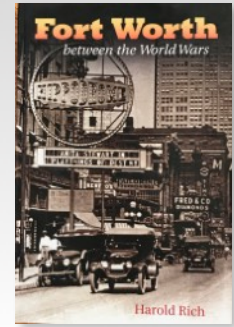
The formal transfer of authority from the republic to the state did not occur immediately after Polk signed the document but in a ceremony held almost two months later, on February 19, 1846. The last President of the Republic of Texas, Dr. Anson Jones, known as the Architect of Annexation, handed over the reins of government to the new state's first Governor, James Pinckney Henderson, having declared, "The final act in this great drama is now performed; the Republic of Texas is no more."

Texas was governed by a new state constitution modeled after the Constitution of the United States and remained a U.S. state for 15 years, until it seceded on March 2, 1861, to become the seventh state to join the Confederate States of America (the sixth and final flag to fly over Texas). On March 30, 1870, the United States Congress readmitted Texas in the Union.

BOOK REVIEWS ON TEXAS HISTORY

by Denise Youngblood

Harold Rich. *Fort Worth between the World Wars*.
College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2020.



Harold Rich's compact history of Fort Worth in the 1920s and 1930s presents an era that few people are old enough to recall with any clarity. Rich argues that after World War I, Fort Worth failed to maintain its dynamic prewar development, falling permanently behind Dallas and Houston in the race to become Texas's most important city, even as it gobbled up surrounding towns to increase its tax base. Although Rich does cover politics and the economy, he is more adept at presenting Fort Worth's culture, crime, and race relations.

This book supports the widely held view that despite the efforts of "civilizers" like Amon Carter, widespread political corruption, including police corruption, made Fort Worth hospitable to all kinds of crime and "vice": gambling, racketeering, prostitution, narcotics smuggling, and until Prohibition was repealed, bootlegging. Although Rich does acknowledge the city's efforts to develop parks and more wholesome entertainment and the efforts of a few wealthy citizens to elevate the city's cultural offerings, Fort Worth became a mecca for "low-brow" entertainment: vaudeville, prize fighting, dancing, and the movies. (Ginger Rogers got her start in Fort Worth by winning a local Charleston dancing contest in 1925.) Street violence, including police shootouts, was common in the 20s, as were the depredations of the KKK against the city's black citizens.

The calamity of the Great Depression altered the cultural scene in unpredictable ways. Amon Carter marshaled funding for large-scale entertainment, like the 1936 Texas Centennial Celebration, and Casa Mañana, Pioneer Palace (famous for its garish and lusty shows), and the Will Rogers Memorial Center opened at around the same time. The crime wave of the 1930s, featuring sensational bank robberies (starring local favorites Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow) and notorious murders, along with major drug busts, hit Fort Worth hard. Police and racial violence continued. It's also interesting to note that author Rich "borrows" two Arlington institutions—Top o' the Hill Terrace and Arlington Downs—to further embellish his tale.

I finished this book wishing that Rich had broadened his focus to offer some comparisons with Fort Worth's competitors. Houston obviously had the oil boom, but what was Dallas doing differently that allowed it to outstrip Fort Worth so dramatically? Nevertheless, AHS members with deep roots in Tarrant County will doubtless enjoy learning the background to some of their family lore about Fort Worth life in the 1920s and 1930s.

Forthcoming: Shirley Reece-Hughes, *Texas Made Modern: The Art of Everett Spruce* (Texas A&M University Press, 2020). This book examines the career of Everett Spruce (1908-2002), once the most famous Texas painter in the U.S.

Arlington Time Capsules

By O.K. Carter

Writers-turned-videographers O.K. Carter and Donna Darovich have a simple explanation for creation of a series of short video documentaries about Arlington history on topics ranging from Arlington Downs Racetrack to the Cemetery of Lost Infants: a virus made them do it.

Bored with the confinements of Covid, writer/historian O.K. Carter pulled out a smallish Canon camcorder one day and asked his wife, writer/journalist Donna Darovich, "How do we use this thing?" The camcorder was two years old but still never-used-brand-new in its case. In short order, Darovich found herself serving as the family videographer, Carter the resident editing and script writing guru – after a helpful online course on video editing.

"Marrow Bone Springs Park" was stashed on YouTube, there – to Carter and Darovich's delight -- to be viewed by hundreds of people. Since then the pair have produced eight local "Arlington Time Capsules" history videos ranging in length from four to fourteen minutes. Some of them, like "Cemetery of Lost Infants," have been viewed by thousands of people. All videos are narrated by Carter and/or Darovich.

The videos are easy to find (links to them are included in the [Arlington Historical Society](#) website, but another easy way is to go to www.youtube.com and type the name of the video in the search blank. Easier still is to click on the hyperlink in the descriptions below, if you are reading this online.

Abram Street (No S): Though no longer the city's main "drag," [Abram Street](#) in Arlington -- once S.H. 1, aka "The Pike," and the busiest highway in the state – has a rich 120-year history and is currently undergoing a renaissance as the focal point of the growing city's resurging downtown.

Arlington Downs Racetrack: For a few short years in the 1930s, [Arlington Downs Racetrack](#) in Arlington, Texas, was the horse racing capital of the American Southwest, thanks to the vision – and the very deep pockets – of the legendary rancher/oilman W.T. Waggoner. Though successful financially, a combination of political, economic (the Great Depression was in full force) and religious pressures forced the closing of the track.

Arlington Mineral Well: Though the intention of Arlington city leaders in the 1890s was to drill a deep public [water well](#) in the very middle of the city – at Main and Center streets – what poured forth was a highly mineralized water that wasn't pleasant to drink but which many people beloved to be medicinal. It became part of the city's brand for more than 60 years.

Marrow Bone Spring Park: At the divide of the Texas Eastern Cross Timbers and the Eagle Ford great prairie along Johnson Creek in Arlington, Texas, [Marrow Bone Spring](#) has

provided reliable water to both early pioneers and to generations of buffalo-hunting Native Americans before them.

Arlington Cemetery (Texas): [Arlington Cemetery](#) – the Texas version, not the one in Virginia – began as the final resting place of a pioneer family but then evolved into a multi-part cemetery for hundreds of Texans after the Civil War through modern days.

Cemetery of Lost Infants: The only remnant of what was once the sprawling campus of the Berachah Home for Erring Girls (unwed mothers-to-be) is a small cemetery on the edge of the UT-Arlington campus. Over the almost four decades the cemetery was in use, infants – and a few mothers – who died in childbirth were buried there, often with just a first name or a number to designate their passing, thus the nickname: [Cemetery of Lost Infants](#).

Fielder House Museum: Once Arlington’s grandest home, the [Fielder House](#) in Arlington, Texas, is now a museum with numerous permanent collections mixed with special exhibitions, all with intriguing links to local or area history. This video has multiple narrators, including AHS director Geraldine Mills.

Caelum Moor: Arlington would seem an unlikely place to house a 540-ton Stonehenge-appearing collection of Scottish-style megalithic sculptures in the city’s Entertainment District – meaning they’re in the same neighborhood (a three-minute walk) as AT&T Stadium (Dallas Cowboys) and Globe Life Field (Texas Rangers). The documentary unravels the tangled tale of how the sculptures, [Caelum Moor](#), arrived on the scene.

Martha B. Walker Donates Her Papers to the Fielder Museum

Martha B. Walker, the first woman elected to the Arlington City Council (1972-82), was also the first student at the Institute of Urban Studies at UTA, where she earned her MA degree. Her range of community service to Arlington is impressive. To cite only a few of her achievements, she helped found the Fielder Museum with Mildred Kibby, participated in planning the city’s Fourth of July celebrations (1974-76), and served on the John Peter Smith Board of Managers (2001-09). She volunteered for many school, church, and Chamber of Commerce projects and organized three reunions of former Arlington mayors, city managers, and City Council members. If all this were not enough, Walker also worked for Arlington Bank and Trust, retiring from its successor, Chase Bank.



The collection is comprised of photographs, negatives, invitations, a guestbook pertaining to the reunions mentioned above, and retrospective lists of Arlington city officials.

(Berachah Home, from p. 1)

Lenexa, Kansas. On the surface both archives provided the basic facts about the Berachah Home and its founders. For instance, James Tony Upchurch was born near Waco, Texas in 1870; although he credited his mother and stepfather for teaching him right from wrong, he did not convert to Christianity until April 11, 1890. On the other hand, Maggie Mae Adams, who was born in 1873 in Tennessee, grew up in the Methodist Church. Their paths eventually crossed in Waco, in 1890 while they were working with the Methodist Church to help women in need. In 1892, they cemented their future in marriage and committed to continue their work helping others. Even more importantly, her father was a staunch supporter of their marriage and their life plan. Mr. Adams even provided the initial funds required to purchase the acreage needed to build the Berachah Home. And so, on May 14, 1903, Reverend Upchurch and his wife Maggie opened the Berachah Industrial Home for the Redemption of Erring Girls in Arlington. The home served young women in Texas and surrounding states until 1935.

However, these few facts told me little about the home. I began to read Upchurch's publication, the *Purity Journal*, with his audience in mind. He was, of course, writing for a contemporary audience, and his readers were familiar with current events little known today. From this vantage point, the articles as well as the advertisements found in the *Purity Journal* indicate that there was a loose network of homes in the United States similar to the Berachah Home. As my research continued, it became apparent that the history of the

Berachah Home needed to be placed in a context that reached far beyond Arlington. Further research revealed that while there were at least 200 homes for young women established across the country in the late 1800s, only a few have been studied by historians. There seems to have been little uniformity in their day-to-day functions, but they were all founded on the same principles: to heal the nation and to help women in need by instilling Christian values.

Following the Civil War, the United States experienced significant changes that led to the establishment of the homes for women. The end of slavery, the advent of Reconstruction, continued western expansion, and the Industrial Revolution transformed almost every aspect of American life. The traditional farming-based economy gave way to one focused on industrial growth. In turn, people's hopes of finding a better life in the cities led to rapid urbanization and an unexpected shift in America's sociocultural landscape.

One area of considerable change during this period involved gender roles. Women were a large part of the urban migration, including young single women who searched for the glamor and sophistication of the larger cities and were willing to accept jobs outside the domestic realm. After all, industrialization made it possible for women to succeed at jobs that once required great physical strength. Women now had new opportunities and freedom both at work and in their social activities. In reality, however, there were not enough jobs to support the influx of people. This period of rapid change proved too much for the leadership of the United States to
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handle; existing political and economic systems could not contend with the sociocultural shifts. Displaced people were left poor, hungry, and homeless, thus, relegated to live in the city slums. As a result, prostitution became the main source of money for many women.

While the United States was stumbling into the 20th century, a parallel evangelical movement was organized in an attempt to save the nation from itself. Originally, evangelicals went into the city slums with Bibles in hand to end prostitution and any other form of vice. It was through these missions that the evangelicals became aware of the unwed mother population. Building places to protect and reform the women was soon to follow.

The evangelical movement also reached into the political realm, and one of the biggest names was Anthony Comstock. In what became known as the “Comstock Law,” he successfully lobbied the United States Congress to strengthen the nation’s anti-obscenity laws to make the distribution of information concerning both contraception and abortion illegal for the first time, in 1873. Comstock enjoyed great public support for this legislation as well as his push for the formation of “purity alliances” on the national stage.

These were the circumstances in which Reverend James Tony Upchurch (1870-1950) and Maggie Mae Adams (1873-1963) were born and raised. Most of what is known about their early years comes from what Upchurch wrote in his *Purity Journal* publication. In a series of autobiographical articles titled “How I Became a Rescue Worker: And Some of My Thrilling Experiences for Ten Years,” Upchurch

explains that his transformation occurred at age 7. While selling newspapers in Waco, he saw his first “outcast”: a young woman kicking and screaming as she was dragged to jail. Upchurch claimed this memory never left him.

In this series, Upchurch made it clear that he was not well educated and had learned through experience how to treat the less fortunate. In so doing, he placed himself among the people he was helping. Even more, Upchurch managed to use his life’s story to mirror the narrative of the evangelical movement. He was born in poverty, had a few rough years as a teenager, then found fulfillment with his own salvation. His testimony offered hope.

After his conversion, Upchurch quickly became a part of the national evangelical movement that would shape the rest of his life and those around him. There are blank spots. For example, he does not mention obtaining a formal education, whether secular or religious. Additionally, it is not clear when and where he was ordained. He simply credits God with filling him with the Holy Spirit. Still, he could not have used the title of reverend without the support of the church.

What about Maggie? She stayed true to her commitment to stand by her husband as they ministered to the poor; there is no indication that this ever changed. Actually, the historical record shows that together they thrived in this atmosphere. They traveled to purity conferences held throughout the United States as well as to other homes for troubled young women. As a result, they had the opportunity to serve with some pivotal members of the evangelical movement, including serving on **(continued on p. 8)**

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the executive committee of the National Purity Federation alongside Anthony Comstock.

Even with all their travels and activities, the reverend and his wife still had time to help the needy. They ran a mission outpost in Waco, then transferred to the Oak Cliff area of Dallas. Eventually, they used their experience and knowledge to establish the Berachah Industrial Home for the Redemption of Erring Girls in Arlington in 1903, a bit late, given that most of the other homes were established before 1900. However, as an active member of the evangelical movement, Upchurch had the advantage of visiting and critiquing other homes; he was observant enough to notice what did and did not work elsewhere. This included administrative functions as well as the best narratives required to attract and

optimize funding. In fact, the Berachah Home enjoyed several years of success, while other homes floundered.

Religion was the driving force of the Berachah Home. In their publications, Reverend Upchurch and Maggie maintained a humble image and never forgot to give God the glory. While Upchurch was an energetic participant in the evangelical movement, in some areas his philosophy differed from the norm. This will be the subject of part 2, to be continued in the next issue of the newsletter.



The Berachah Home (1921).

This Month in Texas History

December. On December 29, 1845, President James K. Polk signed the legislation that annexed Texas to the United States. See Jannette Workman's article on p. 2 for the details.

January. On January 9, 1858, Anson Jones, who served as the fourth and final President of the Texas Republic, died at the Capitol Hotel in Houston of a self-inflicted gunshot wound, despondent due to poor health after a riding accident in 1849, but especially bitter and embarrassed by his failure to be elected to the U.S. Senate. He was eleven days shy of his 60th birthday.

"Downtown Outdoors" Features Knapp Heritage Park

Downtown Arlington recently posted a short article on the Knapp Heritage Park in its new series "Downtown Outdoors," with remarks by AHS director **Geraldine Mills**. It's a great reminder to Arlingtonians that this historic site is located just off Center Street. Check it out at <https://downtownarlington.org/stories>

**Fielder House Exhibition
Honoring Arlington's NSDAR Chapter
November 1 – December 31, 2020**



The Historic Fielder House Museum staff and volunteers have organized an exhibition to recognize the Lucretia Council Cochran Chapter (LCCC) of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) for its nearly 70 years of historic preservation work since its founding in 1953. Over this period, LCCC members have amassed countless hours of planning and work involving numerous projects related to the society's major goals of promoting history education, historic preservation, and patriotism. These range from fundraising for the purchase and 1957 installation of the marker for the site of the first stagecoach inn in Arlington, to an award winning cookbook featuring Arlington's history and first families in 1975, to most recently—the stellar fundraising activities and labor involved with the rescue and renovation of our historic cemeteries in the 600 block of West Arkansas Lane, the Arlington Heritage Memorial Grounds. The cemeteries restoration project received well-deserved state and regional recognition from the NSDAR for historic preservation. According to Kristina Rumans, who spearheaded the LCCC's participation in restoring and preserving the cemeteries, the chapter is always looking for Arlington's "under told stories," which dovetails nicely with the aims of the Arlington Historical Society.

This exhibit seeks to tell the "under told story" of the LCCC NSDAR chapter's contributions to the Arlington community and will be displayed in the main entrance hall at Fielder House from November 1 through December 31, 2020. There are also a few copies of the 4th edition of the chapter's *Arlington Treasured Recipes* cookbook for sale at the museum, for anyone wanting to share some of Arlington's history with family and friends. Originally compiled to celebrate the U.S. Bicentennial/Arlington Centennial, the inaugural edition of 5,000 numbered copies sold out at a time when the population of Arlington was "only" 126,000, suggesting that perhaps one out of every 25 households may have acquired a copy. The cookbook, which features brief histories of Arlington's pioneering families along with the recipes, received first place in the Bicentennial Project competition for the state of Texas, according to information provided by Elizabeth Patel, the chapter's current regent. Three subsequent editions were printed, and proceeds from sales funded many chapter projects in Arlington. Don't miss this opportunity to get Louise Yocum Shallcross's fail-proof praline recipe, one of many favorites in the volume!

The Fielder House Museum, located at 1616 W. Abram St., is currently open for socially distanced tours by appointment, and is in compliance with CDC and state mandated COVID protocols. To schedule a tour, contact the AHS by telephone, (817) 460-4001 or email, fielderh@swbell.net.