

Rosedale Rambles

1993 through 1999

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1999 ROSEDALE RAMBLE

Collected, researched, and written by Rosedale resident Karen Sikes Collins with special help from Janet Long Fish, Merle George Gleckler, Richard Peterson, Lawrence Durbin, Vic Elam, Eugene Baker, Margaret Faubion White, Bernice Mueller Holle, Forrest “Toddy” Preece, Myrtle Seiders Cuthbertson, Morris Basey, Marie Payne Moreland, Marie Norwood Roberts, Forrest Troutman, Marilyn Houston Ferguson, C.E. Pearson, Ralph K. Watts, Verna Pickle Warwick, Judy Clark Zaleski, Bee Crenshaw, Gil Elsass, Cleta Powell, Faye Smith, Lillian Lindeman, William S. and Treva Brewington, Marvin DeGlandon, Pete Walter, Willie Belle Coker, John and Esther Bieseke, Lilla Kay, Ambra Mayton Reedy, Jesse Chrisner, Bill and Russell Brown, and Gus Dugger.

-Introduction-

Have you ever wondered about those who owned your homeplace, your land, before you? All of us who live in Rosedale share the same beginnings and can trace our deeds back to common antecedents. The earliest people in Rosedale, the Indians, held no land and had no deeds. But with the coming of the Europeans, our land became a commodity to give and sell. The governments first of Spain and then Mexico claimed title to the area now called Rosedale (this area of Texas was never under the French flag) but the land was not put into private ownership until the 1830s. Our land in Rosedale has been coveted by some famous people and herein lies an interesting story.

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN AND THOMAS JEFFERSON CHAMBERS – The first specific title to the land that now is Rosedale was issued before the Texas Revolution by the Mexican government and from this very first deed there was trouble. The land which is now Rosedale was part of Stephen F. Austin’s “Little Colony.” The Mexican government signed a contract with Austin in 1827 to introduce one hundred families into the area. The boundary between Austin’s Little Colony and the grant to the north, later known as Robertson’s Colony, was what is now the boundary between Travis and Williamson counties. The Colorado River bounded the colony on the south. Austin selected an eleven-league tract which included Rosedale (approximately 48,000 acres) for his personal use. It had rich land, fine pasture for sheep and horses and was well watered with springs. He planned to build his home here. His secretary Samuel M. Williams was instructed several times to make sure the title to that land was in Austin’s name for his personal use and not to sell (information from The Austin Papers, edited by Eugene C. Barker).

But something shady happened. On June 30, 1835, the Mexican government deeded this land selected by Austin to Thomas Jefferson Chambers, a surveyor and naturalized citizen of Mexico. His uncle, Talbot Chambers, Commissioner of Coahuila and Texas, may have been responsible for registering the deed. Thomas Chambers, born in Virginia in 1802, the youngest of 20 children, was also a lawyer and land speculator who acquired several large tracts of land in Texas illegally or under suspicious circumstances. During his entire adult life, Chambers sought political prominence through elected office or military appointment but his better qualities were overshadowed by debt, dishonesty, and violence. After learning that one tract he had bought was sold for back taxes during his absence, Chambers shot and killed the new owner. All of us in

Rosedale will find the original deed in the Travis County Courthouse to our land to be dated June 30, 1835, and issued to this scoundrel, Thomas Jefferson Chambers.

Of course, early citizens and officials of Austin's colony knew of Chambers reputation and shady dealings. In 1836, when Texas gained its independence from Mexico, the new Republic provided for a Land Office to be in charge of deeds. Almost all Mexican deeds were accepted by the new Republic. But not Chambers' claim to this tract of land on which much of Austin now stands. Beginning in 1838, the Texas Land Office began granting this land to others. The Rosedale area was part of a league of land granted to George Washington Spier who quickly sold the land in smaller parcels. Those who purchased the land from Spier soon found themselves in a lawsuit brought by Chambers (if you have your old title abstract, you will notice many pages consumed by this lawsuit). Chambers was a very unpopular person in Austin because of this suit which clouded land titles for many years and hampered the settlement of part of Travis County. Chambers was disliked throughout the state as well as in Austin and it did not surprise many when Chambers was mysteriously assassinated with a shotgun blast through his parlor window on March 15, 1865, at his home in Chambers County. Most landowners here settled with Chambers' estate in the 1860s paying a second time for their land but clearing their title; however, it was not until 1925 that the Texas legislature paid Chambers' heirs \$20,000 to clear the title to the State Capitol site (information from the Handbook of Texas, 1996, Vol. 2 and a thesis written by Llerena B. Friend, 1928).

GEORGE WASHINGTON SPIER – George Washington Spier's name appears on all our deeds in Rosedale as well. He received the land on February 24, 1838, from the Republic of Texas; that was before there was a town of Austin. Spier had come to Texas when it was still part of Mexico and had served with the Army of Texas fighting for Texas independence. As a settler in Texas, he was entitled to a Headright league of land (4,428). He selected a long narrow tract fronting on the Colorado River and running north to Anderson Lane which included much of Shoal Creek and its springs (the same land claimed by Thomas Jefferson Chambers). He filed his survey with the Land Office on February 24, 1838, and starting that day sold tracts to Gideon White, Norman Wood, Thomas and David Adams, and John Hancock. Spier was a hog farmer in Fayette County who operated a post office out of his home and served as a justice of the peace, road commissioner, and land commissioner. He used his headright league to raise some cash and had no interest in living here. Unfortunately, Spier died later that year before the Land Office issued a clear title and for three years, those who purchased this land from Spier had only a title bond to the land.

GIDEON WHITE – Most of us who live in Rosedale can trace our title back to Gideon White, an Alabama planter, who purchased one fourth of the league (1,237 acres) from Spier. White has the unwanted distinction of having been killed by Indians on Shoal Creek. Within two years of purchasing the land, the White family (consisting of Gideon and Elizabeth White, five daughters, and eight slaves) was living in a double pen dogrun log house on the west bank of Shoal Creek at Seiders Spring (then called White's Spring). In 1842, Mexican troops under Rafael Vasquez invaded Texas again and captured San Antonio. Residents of Austin (population over 800) and the government hurriedly left. With only a handful of people left in town, the Indians began more frequent raids. The White family moved from their house on Shoal Creek into town. There were numerous deaths among the settlers of Austin in 1842 and one of them was Gideon White who had ridden from town to his house on Shoal Creek (between 34th and 38th) to look after some cattle. A newspaper account of his death said he was "killed within half a mile of his own house on Shoal Creek, by a party of about a dozen Indians. He probably fired his rifle as they bore down upon him, and then ran into a thicket where he was found in a few minutes after

shot in several places... A party of citizens came out in time to see some of the Indians as they returned, but it was nearly dark and no pursuit could be made. The Indians were supposed to be Wacos, and left with such precipitation, that they did not scalp him... Mr. White killed one of the Indians.” Upon his death, his wife divided the land into five parcels, one for each daughter. Perhaps because Austin was nearly deserted at that time, the girls did not receive title to their land until 1846 when Texas became a state and the government was moved back to Austin. White’s slaves were also bequeathed to his daughters and wife. Those of us who reside south of 40th Street live on land inherited by the three youngest daughters: Louisa Maria Seiders, Rebecca Caroline Thompson, or Narcissa Lucinda Fisk. All three of these tracts eventually passed into the hands of Edward Seiders. Those of us north of 40th Street will find the names of the two oldest daughters on our deeds: Cornelia Jane Johnson and Elizabeth Ann Moore. Gideon White’s land did not follow Shoal Creek as our neighborhood now does. There is a strip of land along the creek which was purchased by John Hancock from Spier and a few of us along Shoal Creek Boulevard will find Hancock and not White as an antecedent. Louisa and Edward Seiders (and later his second wife, Lettie) lived on the land south of 40th Street, Cornelia and Enoch Johnson built their home at 41st and Medical Parkway, and Elizabeth and Martin Moore constructed the log and limestone farmstead at 4811 Sinclair.

CORNELIA, ELIZABETH, LOUISA, REBECCA, AND NARCISSA WHITE – After Chambers, Spier, and Gideon White, these five girls were fourth owners of most of Rosedale.

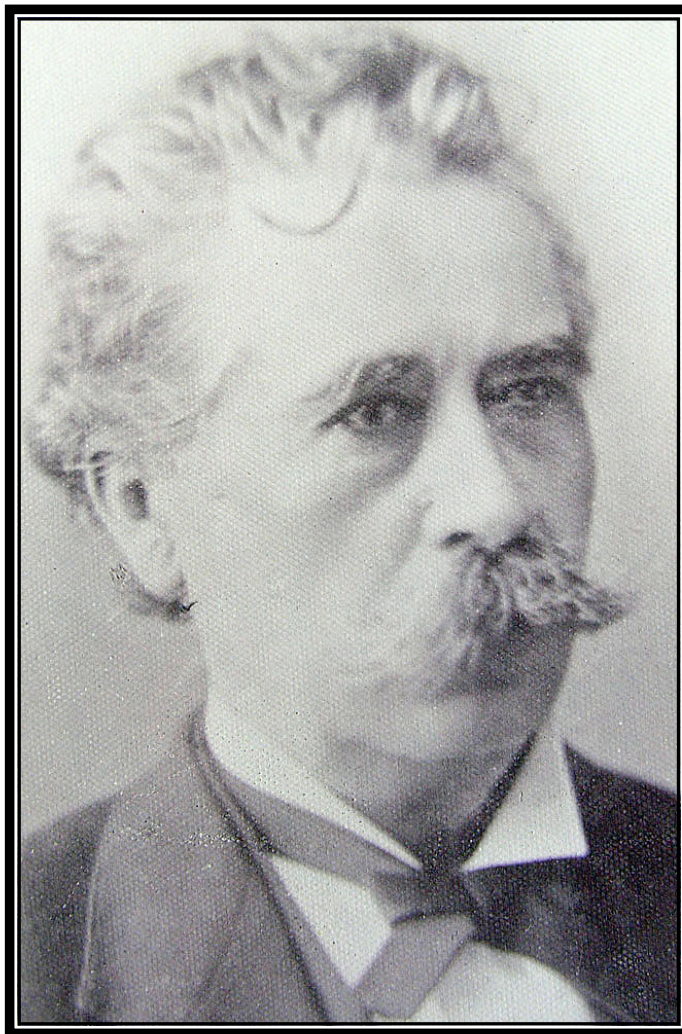
Narcissa Lucinda was the youngest, born about 1828 in Alabama. She was only 14 years old when her father was killed by Indians. Gideon’s partner/manager, Edward Seiders, was named her legal guardian and managed her property until 1848 when she married Josiah Fisk, a lawyer and later judge from New York. In 1849, Seiders purchased Narcissa’s tract of land (67 4/5 acres). Narcissa and Josiah had three children.

Rebecca Caroline was born about 1827 in Alabama. She married at the age of 16 just months after her father’s death. Her husband, James, was the son of W.W. Thompson, hotel owner in Austin and one of Stephen F. Austin’s original colonists. W.W. Thompson came to Texas with Austin in 1821 and was the first man with his family to move to the new townsite of Austin, according to his obituary. When gold was discovered in California, the Thompson family (including James and Rebecca) closed out their business interests in Austin and went to Southern California (1846). Rebecca sold her tract of 70 acres to Thomas Osborn in 1847. Rebecca had only one daughter. The Thompsons later moved to Arizona.

Louisa Maria, the middle daughter, born in 1826, was sixteen when her father was killed. The same year she received title to her 52 ¼ acres (1846), she married her father’s partner/manager, Edward Seiders, who was 13 years older than she. Seiders was from New York but had moved to New Orleans to try to overcome tuberculosis. He later met up with Gideon White and both came to Austin when it was named the new capitol of Texas. Seiders owned a saloon in town but also helped White on his farm north of town. In 1847, Seiders purchased his sister-in-law’s original tract from Thomas Osborn and in 1849, he also purchased Narcissa’s. Together with his wife’s inheritance, he then owned 188 acres with a large house and plenty of water. In 1850, Seiders and Louisa moved to the original White log home at the springs which later took his name. Louisa died in 1854. Edward remarried and continued living in the old White homestead for many years. He later built a bath house and concession at the springs which became a popular resort area for Austinites. Edward and Louisa had three sons.

Elizabeth Ann, born in 1824 in Alabama, married Irish store owner, Martin Moore, in 1844 when Austin was nearly deserted. She and Martin had a nice home on 20 acres near the French Legation. Perhaps because Elizabeth and Cornelia were the oldest, they received from their father's estate large unimproved tracts of land farther from town at a time when Indians were still raiding the area. When her father died, the oldest girl, **Cornelia Jane** (born in 1821), was already married to Enoch S. Johnson, a disinherited young man of good family from North Carolina. Both Elizabeth and Cornelia built homes on their 521 acres and lived there, Elizabeth at 4811 Sinclair and Cornelia at 41st and Medical Parkway. When Cornelia contracted "consumption" (tuberculosis), she and Enoch sold their home in 1858 to Abner Cook who immediately sold it to George Hancock. Hoping a change of environment would improve Cornelia's health, the Johnsons moved to Williamson County but Cornelia died the next year. She and Enoch had seven children. Elizabeth and Martin spent 10 years together on their farmstead raising horses until he was killed by one of the horses in 1859. Elizabeth continued to live on the farm raising her five children alone until 1866 when she sold to neighbor, John Hancock. So eventually Gideon White holdings in Rosedale settled into the hands of three men: Edward Seiders, George Hancock, and John Hancock.

JOHN AND GEORGE HANCOCK – The Hancock brothers were sons of a planter and slave owner in Alabama where both were born.



John Hancock

The older, George, came to Texas in time to help win independence from Mexico but John did not arrive until the late 1840s. George ran a successful store in downtown Austin while John was a lawyer. They were both Unionists, not Confederates, but were also slave holders. Following the Civil War which stripped John of half his wealth by freeing his twenty-one slaves, John began to buy land for a large farming operation. He purchased the land inherited by Elizabeth while George bought what was left of Cornelia's tract.

John became a rather famous Austinite starting as the youngest district court judge and ending his long career serving four terms in the United States House of Representatives. It was the Hancocks who finally settled with Chambers' estate in the late 1860s and cleared titles in the Rosedale area. During the next thirty years following the Civil War, most of Rosedale was owned by Edward Seiders (south of 40th), George Hancock, or John Hancock. That area north of 40th Street between the creek and Medical Parkway became the Hancock Dairy Tract about 1870

and remained an active dairy operation until about 1900. This is when our deeds cease to converge on common owners in the past.

If, when you purchased your home, you did not receive the Title Abstract from the previous owner, call them and ask about it. The Title Abstract used to be a legal document but now title insurance has made it obsolete. These small little books summarize every document filed in the courthouse about your property, from sale of slaves to settlement of boundary disputes to depositions as well as deeds. All liens are also abstracted and can often tell you who built your house, how much it cost and how big it was.

THE ROSEDALE TRIO – As related by Cleta Powell and Faye Smith – In 1946, Cleta and T.O. Powell moved to 4518 Sinclair Avenue. Their two children attended Rosedale Elementary School where Cleta was involved in the P.T.A. There she met Faye Smith and Esther Slaughter who also were active in the P.T.A. The three mothers discovered that each enjoyed singing and soon formed a trio that performed at P.T.A. meetings, Zilker Hillside Theatre, Lions Club, and other get-togethers. They specialized in western songs like “Don’t Fence Me In.” In 1950, they made a 78 rpm record with “For Ever and Ever” on one side and “Tumbleweed” on the other. In 1953, the Powells moved out of the neighborhood. Faye and Ivan Smith and their six children lived at 4513 Rosedale from 1936 to 1953. Esther and Barney Slaughter lived out of the neighborhood. The trio performed together for nearly ten years before giving it up but remained friends. Esther has recently passed away but Cleta and Faye still live in Austin.

1008 W. 34TH STREET – BASEY GROCERY (now gone) – As related by descendant Morris Basey – The Basey family farmed in Angelina County in East Texas until right after World War I. In 1919, Jim Basey started a grocery store at 35th and McDonald (3510 McDonald). He sold out to his cousin, Robert E. Lee Basey, in 1924. Robert Basey operated the grocery there until 1929 when he hired Lee Gartman to build a new store and house building at 1008 W. 34th Street. Robert and his wife, Sarah Elizabeth, and their ten children (O.C., Nobie, Morris, Wayland, V.D., Margie, Betty Lou, Gerald, Ora Lee, and Sarah Ann) lived there and ran the store until 1942.

The Baseys sold produce, meat, candy, other food stuffs, firewood, and gasoline. Robert’s meat counter was about 14’ long and at one end it had an ice-holding box. He would put a block of ice in the ice box, salt it, and it would keep the counter cold for 24 hours. Fresh meat was delivered daily to the store. Produce came from San Antonio. Alex Sunday would drive to San Antonio, buy a load of produce, ice it down, and deliver it to the Baseys and others the next morning. There was a candy counter with glass top and front with bins full of candy delivered by candy peddlers and by McNamar Candy Company. Weiners and bologna were also delivered by a peddler to the store. Fresh bread came from Kohn’s Bon Ton Bakery (Pan Dandy Bread) or SureBest or Swansons’ at 29th and Guadalupe. The wood was brought in from the hills west of town and sold for \$8.00 a cord. Almost every man on Pratt and McDonald had a team of two horses and a wagon. They would cut wood every day, load it into the wagons, and then drive into town and sell it to Baseys. At Dry Creek Hill, the woodcutters had learned to station a spare team to pull their loaded wagons up the hill. The Basey grocery store had a telephone and people could call in orders. Groceries and wood were delivered. Son Morris delivered wood in a Baby Overland. They had bought the four-door touring car used, had taken off the top, removed the back seat, and wired the doors shut. The back would hold exactly a rick of wood.

The twelve Baseys lived in a two-bedroom house attached to the store. It had a long sleeping porch where most of the children slept. The Baseys bought the first Victrola in the neighborhood

in 1921 and the first radio in about 1928. When “Amos and Andy” came on, there would be ten or fifteen adult neighbors who would visit to listen. The Basey children played with Korn (3505 Wabash and 3500 McDonald), Isherwood (3500 Wabash), Fluedinger (3405 Wabash), Rosentritt (1008 W. 35th Street and 3402 McDonald), and Swanson (3411 Pratt Ave.) children. Mrs. Basey employed black neighbor, Josephine Manor, to help with housework. In 1942, the Baseys closed their grocery and sold their building to the Austin Vacuum cleaner Company.

SHOAL CREEK FROM 39TH ½ STREET SOUTH – HIKE AND BIKE TRAIL – As related by Janet Long Fish – In 1952, Janet Fish (daughter of Walter E. Long) had the idea that a walking path along the roadbed of the old Comanche Trail would help preserve the disappearing historic road. The Comanche Trail ran from the shoals in the Colorado River up along Shoal Creek to 34th Street where it crossed the creek and continued west and north into the hills. Janet and husband Russ Fish approached the Austin Parks and Recreation Board with the idea. All that year they went to meetings of the board trying to get some action and all the next year. After five years, Janet decided to get a bulldozer and do it on her own. Husband Russ went before the City Council and got authorization to proceed at their own cost – no city money was appropriated or spent. However, the Fishes contracted with the city when possible. They began at Pease Park and worked north as far as their money would take them. Over the next four years, Janet literally led the bulldozer along the trail to grade it according to city requirements. Eddie Shanoltz was driving the bulldozer one day with Janet in front of him when she disappeared into the 6’ high ragweed. From then on, Janet would throw her hat in the air every few steps so he could follow her. A few property owners, nervous about encroachment onto their land and in ignorance of where their property line ran, occasionally would wreck the work done the day before. On one such occasion when Janet was checking to see if the previous day’s work would have to be redone, she came upon a sleeping man wrapped in a pink and gray quilt lying on a rock beside Shoal Creek. She later reported this to authorities who were looking for a man who had killed a police officer. She didn’t know it, but Janet had found their man.

Other people began to get interested and help. Many times surveyor, Marlton Metcalfe, would come locate property lines gratis for Janet. The Arch Rowan Foundation from Ft. Worth gave money to prune the live oak trees along the path and to pay for the concrete aggregate surface between 34th and 38th streets which was the vacated Lakeside Blvd. from the 1890 Glen Ridge Subdivision. They also funded the steps on the east side connecting the trail to the parking lot above. Rosedale residents Dr. and Mrs. Vincent Murray paid for a culvert over a gully at about 39th Street in front of the Jewish synagogue so walkers could continue on the trail. The scout troops from Bryker Woods School planted coral yucca along the path. Mrs. C.A. Schutze donated the statue of St. Francis which stands on a ledge marking Seiders Spring along the trail between 34th and 38th. A group of senior citizens from a Lutheran church began walking the trail every day picking up trash; the women saved broom and mop handles and the men put nails on the end for members to carry and pick up trash. Children were trained as Junior Deputies to go in pairs or groups to record license numbers of illegal vehicles on the trail and to report vandalism, dead animals, fires, or other unusual things. Doctors began sending their patients to the trail for exercise. Several students from the Texas School for the Blind on 45th Street wrote Janet asking if the trail could be extended to 45th. When that section was opened, blind students walked all the way to Pease Park and sometimes climbed the steps to the parking lot near 38th to fly kites. The University of Texas cross country team trained on the trail even during the late night hours increasing the security of trail users. Homer Goehrs donated 5 lbs. of bluebonnet seeds and many others planted plants. One month Janet and a helper named De Leon planted dozens of yuccas in an open space across from the Jewish synagogue. One evening when Janet

was driving by, she saw a truckload of men stealing the yuccas she had so painfully planted. The yuccas were soon repatriated.

The head of the trail now is about 39th ½ Street. That portion of the Hike and bike Trail in the Rosedale area is one of the prettiest – it runs beside Seiders Spring where wild water cress still grows and through Seiders Oaks near the old Gideon White homesite between 34th and 38th streets. Since 1961, the City of Austin has maintained and patrolled the trail.

1218 W. 39TH STREET – As related by descendant Merle George Gleckler and reconstructed from deed records – In August, 1894, Robert F. and Maggie R. Lawson purchased this tract from Letitia Seiders, second wife of Edward Seiders whose first wife had inherited it from her father, Gideon White. Lawson had this house built in 1894 or possibly 1895. But in 1899, the Lawsons sold the house to their cousin, Cassie Wood, and her husband, Leonard Fred George. Cassie came from an educated family in Larissa, Texas, and had worked at the Lunatic Asylum before marrying Fred in 1895. Fred worked for the city maintaining the trolleys and tracks. Both Fred and Cassie were avid readers. Fred and Cassie purchased several nearby lots over the next twenty years and also made arrangements to use a 25-acre pasture for some cattle.

The Georges had five children: Merle, twin boys Roy and Ray, and another set of twin boys, Felix and Phillip. After Fred's death, Cassie raised the family alone. She had infantile paralysis which left one arm useless. But in spite of this, Cassie built two rooms on the north side of the house herself. Then she hired a Mr. McCarty to build the sleeping porch on the south side. Neighbors remember in the summertime Cassie George pulling ice cold water from the well on the front (east) porch with her one good hand and filling washtubs set in the yard in the sun so the children could have a warm bath on Saturday nights. Cassie rarely let her children play beyond her yard. Merle attended the University of Texas receiving a B.A. degree in zoology. She taught for a few years and married in the early 1930s. Two of the boys, Felix and Phillip, became professional golfers. Felix, a Class A member of the Professional Golfers Association, taught golf to hundreds of youngsters at Municipal Golf Course and, from 1951 to his death in 1968, at Hancock Golf Park. Phillip was a golf pro at the Lions Municipal course from 1945 to 1981 when he moved to Hancock where he worked until his death in 1984.

The house remained in the George family until April, 1994. At that time, W.H. Looney II purchased the house and adjacent large lot. He constructed an addition on the west side of the George house and enclosed the south porch. The well no longer comes up through the floor of the east porch. The house is now over 100 years old.

3812 TONKAWA TRAIL - As related by Ambra Mayton Reedy – In 1951, Monroe and Ambra Mayton purchased this lot from Mrs. Ella Correll, a teacher at the Blind School. They engaged G.C. Daniels to build a house for them (\$15,000). They chose this location because of its closeness to the Mayton Grocery Store at 38th and Lamar in which they were partners. The lot also had two nice oak trees on the back. In 1959, the Maytons added a den and in 1962 another enlargement added an efficiency apartment for Ambra's mother and a double carport to the house. It now had four bedrooms and three baths. Monroe died in 1971 and Ambra remarried G.V. Reedy – the Reedys still occupy the home.

LEWIS LANE AND BURNET ROAD FROM 40TH TO 42ND STREET – As written by Gus Dugger – “I was told that there had been an open spring about 100 yards up Lewis Lane from 40th Street and that Indians camped there before the white men came. There was a huge elm tree at that site I guessed to be nearly 50 feet tall which died sometime before 1938. I was told that

Lewis Lane was an old highway in the early days and that the spring and later a brick-lined water well on the northwest corner of Lewis Lane and 40th was a stopover. In my youth, Lewis Lane was all grown up with trees and was a drainage ditch from 42nd to 40th. Then the gully went across McGuire's pasture and by Durbin's house on 39th ½ and on down to Shoal Creek. My father-in-law, Rudolph Placke, and I cut down trees in Lewis Lane to burn in our wood stoves. Lewis Lane when it was still a ditch was about 3 or 4 feet deep from 41st to 42nd. It carried all the rain water from 42nd and above. After Lewis Lane was opened up, my brother, Bill Dugger, built the houses from 40th to 41st for rent houses. At one time the water cut across the upper corner of my dad's field and I had to fill in my front yard to curb level when I built at 1305 W. 42nd in 1939.


“As for Burnet Road between 40th and 42nd, this strip of land had a double row of chinaberry trees about 20 feet high. They were so close they had ‘no shape’ as a normal tree would have. I'm sure they were planted to be sold when they were saplings. Being abandoned, they grew into a thicket. I have seen robins fall out of the trees drunk from eating the fermented chinaberries. My dad had built a storm cellar to take shelter in when bad storms came. This shelter was in the way of Burnet Road and therefore it was destroyed and another smaller one built closer to the house. My dad donated half of the right-of-way for Burnet Road so that the west side of his land would have a street for the lots that would eventually be built upon. It seemed I heard my parents talk that if he didn't donate the land, the developers might move the plat over a half block and that would put the Rosedale lots backing up to the florist land with no street. This would have been in 1931. I don't remember how they removed the chinaberry trees but I do remember the drop bottom mule-drawn wagons that hauled the gravel for the road. The bottom of the wagon was like two doors held up closed with two chains and when they emptied, all they had to do was release the chains, the doors dropped down and the gravel fell out. The road grader had two small wheels in front about 24” to 30” high and larger ones in the back. The operator stood on a platform just about over the back axle with the mules' reins over his shoulder. There were two spoked wheels on each side of him that he would use to raise and lower one end or the other of the grader blade. The wheels were of cast iron and were about 36” in diameter. They would act as fly wheels when he would spin them. There was another wheel right in front of him (like a steering wheel on a car) about 20” to 24” in diameter that he would turn to adjust the ‘cut’ of the blade (angle of blade). They did not compact the gravel with a roller and the first rain rutted it so bad you could hardly drive on it. However, the cars finally compacted it.”

4001 MEDICAL PARKWAY – This triangular area, once part of Ramsey's Nursery, was vacant for many years but Richard Peterson, who lived across the street at 4004 Medical Parkway, recalled several things that happened on the vacant lot. “My uncles who operated Peterson's Grocery on the northwest corner of this intersection bought this triangle to keep another grocery store from being built in competition (there was already Costley Grocery on the southwest corner). This triangle lot was vacant but frequently used. A one-armed man named Paul Wechter lived here for three years in a parked truck. He worked for the city as a weigher at the scales in east Austin. In his spare time, he searched out, dug up, and shipped north Mountain Laurel plants. The Plumb Axe salesman used to demonstrate his product and challenge local woodmen here. But one of the most interesting things to happen here was Adolph Topperwein, a salesman for the Winchester rifle, used to set up targets in the vacant lot and shoot the outline of an Indian in it.” Lawrence Durbin, who lived at 4206 Medical Parkway, recalled “Mr. Topperwein had his wife with him and she shot, too, and was about as good as he was. The Winchester people put it on and let people know about it. There were a lot of people there. He

cut an Indian head in a piece of metal with a 22. A couple of years later, he demonstrated again at Camp Mabry.”

Ad Topperwein and his wife, Elizabeth, were among the world’s finest marksmen. Winchester hired them to travel the country demonstrating the Winchester rifles. Both set records. Elizabeth “Plinky” once shot for a straight five hours hitting 1,952 traps out of 2,000. Her husband once shot at 72,500 blocks and missed only nine shooting steadily eight hours a day for 10 days in a row. The two photographs below following the Ad Topperwein photograph are of metal target sheets with the Indian head outline shot by Ad Topperwein and owned by a Sanderson woman, Anne Kerr.

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Topperwein



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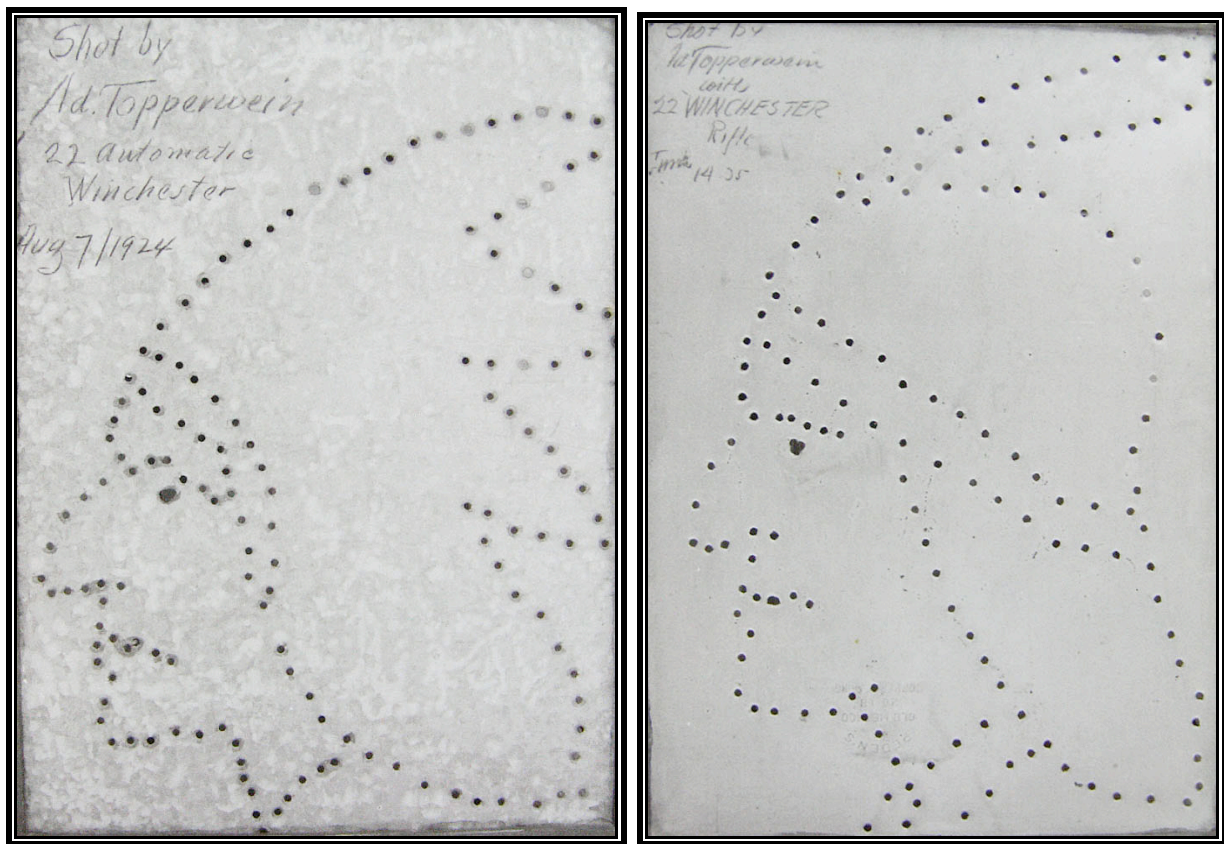
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Indian heads shot by Ad Topperwein in August, 1924, and June, 1935, with 22 Winchester Rifle

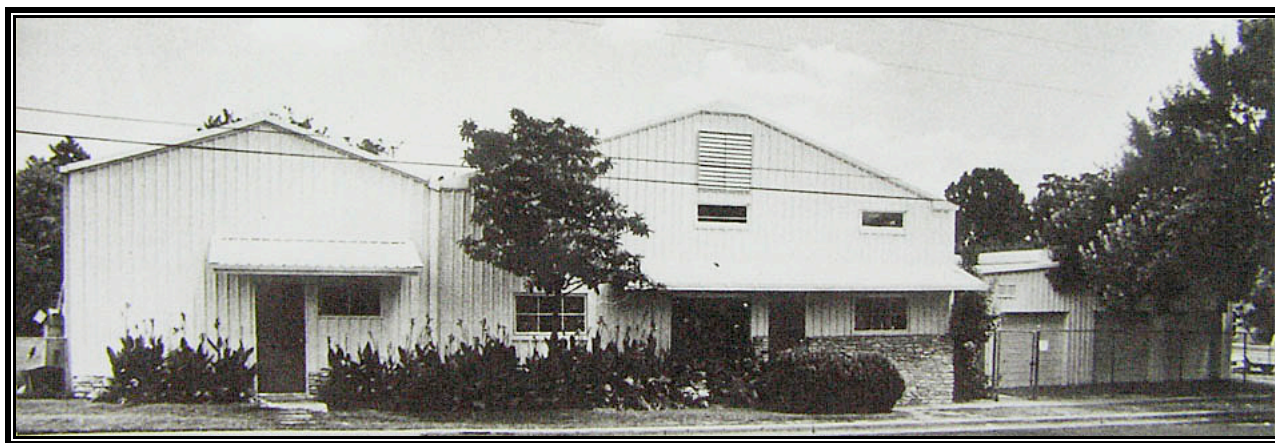
In 1960, Ballard's Grocery was built in the Topperweins' shooting gallery and was operated in partnership by Clovis Ballard and Hilmer Von Quintus. For a while, it was Von's Grocery when the partnership was dissolved but in the early 1980s, the Ballard family bought out Von Quintus and operated the store as Ballard's Grocery. In 1997, the Ballard family sold the grocery.

1707 W. 42ND STREET – As related by Lilla Kay – This Ranch style house was built in 1946 by architect William Wayne Huff for \$8,700 for James E. and Katharine Pirie. The contract called for “one five-room stone veneer and frame residence and hollow tile garage and guest house.” Fossiliferous limestone was used on the house. The Piries had a Mexican style corner fireplace built in their bedroom. Katharine's mother, Mrs. Nora Atkinson, bought the lot behind her daughter's house and built a home there (4111 Shoal Creek Blvd.). The Piries sold 1707 to Lilla and Roy Ray Kay in 1954. In 1970-71, the Kays hired a contractor named Larry Crook to connect the guest house and garage to the main house and in doing so, created a family room. To achieve the desired color for the front door, the painter was given a stem of blue/purple statice. The Kays still occupy this home. The yard is full of volunteer red bud trees.

1314 N. 42ND STREET – CRENSHAW'S ATHLETIC CLUB (now gone) – As related by Beatrice Cain Crenshaw and Gil Elsass – In 1952, Bill and Bee Crenshaw purchased a lot on the northeast corner of 42nd and Burnet Road and built a gym. Because Burnet Road at that time was an unpaved alley, the gym was addressed on 42nd Street. They added a swimming pool the next year and later added two wings to the gym. At first Bee taught tap and ballet and Bill taught trampoline and then tumbling. But as the interest in gymnastics grew, they dropped dance and added gymnastic exercises now standard: floor exercises, balance beam, parallel bars, and vaulting for girls and floor exercise, balance beam, vaulting, parallel bars, rings, and sidehorse for boys. The gym opened at 9AM for preschoolers but the serious gymnasts trained in the

evening. The Crenshaws were among the first in the country to have age group teams in gymnastic competition.

Bill was from Dallas where he had a hand-balancing act. He had been trained by Mr. Parker, a circus man. He came to the University of Texas as a 20-year-old freshman just before World War II and was immediately asked to start a gymnastics program at the university. He met Beatrice Cain, a third generation Austinite, at the university. She and her three sisters had a tumbling act. They married and Bill soon entered the Navy. After the war, he resumed teaching at the university until he retired in 1970 with a Ph.D. in education. Some of Bill's university students earned a little extra by being instructors at Crenshaw's: Allen Bean (U.S. astronaut who walked on the moon), Harley Clark (a district judge), Wallie Freytag (coach at Reagan High School for many years), Bobby Sargeant (Burt Reynolds' stunt man in Hollywood), and Dick Hancock (stuntman in Terminator 2 and other movies).



Crenshaw's Athletic Club, 1950s

Bill Crenshaw was a member of the U.S. Olympic Committee 1964-1968 and his gymnastics teams won two national team championships. Those teams included Carol Rabun (also a member of the 1963 National Women's Gymnastics Team and a Texas AAU diving champion), Avis Tieber (later coach on the world gymnastics team) and Beverly Averyt (national trampoline champion). Also a student at Crenshaw's was Melody Hickman Evans (state champion and presently teaching at McCallum High School). Bill was the U.S. coach of the Women's Trampoline team in 1966 and won many awards for his contributions to the sport of gymnastics. In 1976, Bee and Bill sold the gym to former student Art Elsass and his brother Gil who had been a competitive gymnast at the University of Texas.

The Elsass brothers continued operating the gym in Rosedale until 1984 when they moved to 5000 Fairview. The old building at 42nd and Burnet Road was torn down and a specialty hospital now occupies the site. Bee and Bill had created a morning preschool program concentrating on dance, gym, and swimming. The Elsass brothers expanded this program to include more academics (such as computer lab) and have a highly successful preschool and afterschool program. In their new facility, they were also able to add an adult fitness center. In addition, they now have two daycare facilities in addition to the Crenshaw center.



Students and parents at Crenshaw's Athletic Club – 1955

Back Row: Bee Crenshaw, child Dana Womack, Mary Rabun, Richard Rabun, Paula Womack, Mickey Hickman, Ethel Munson, Bobby Boyd, Mrs. Boyd, ? , Mrs. Parker, Sam Parker

Children Sitting: ? , Raymond Hickman, Sidney Lanier, Larry Womack, Bobby Boyd, Terry Parker, Jay Mummall, Merle Williams, Carol Rabun, Wanda Munson, Penny Parker, Mary Williams, Melody Hickman

4301 ROSEDALE – THE RAMSEY PARK MOTHERS' CLUB – Although Ramsey Park was dedicated in 1934, for the next five years it was used only informally as a play area. It wasn't until 1939 that the city placed paid part-time leadership there. By early 1943, it was clear to the Ramsey Park director and to parents that help was needed in organizing and supervising the thousands of children who used the park and swimming pool. Lillian Lindeman (Mrs. Mark H.) took the lead in organizing the Ramsey Park Mothers' Club along the lines of other park mothers' clubs in Austin. The club met in homes during the winter but in the summer, they met every Tuesday night at 8PM at the park. Every Friday night was Community Night with planned activities for children and their families. The club raised money by selling punch on Friday nights and holding a carnival (the first at Ramsey Park). With this money, they purchased 10 park benches and made cloth curtains for the stage. That first year, the club also sold \$1,875 in stamps and bonds on Friday nights to help the war effort, more than any other playground in Austin (Bailey was second with \$1,600 and Shipe sold only \$109.10). Among the programs at the park in 1943 were a patriotic show including tumbling, a sing-song, and tap dances; two plays "Wildcat Willie" and "Sleeping Beauty;" a water show; a "backward party" in which even a baseball game was played backward; a carnival with an art booth, quilt show, cake walk,

puppet show, freak show, fortune teller, and three food booths; a variety show of folk dancing and a play. The children of Ramsey Park were the performers aided by the park director and Mothers' Club. The park children also participated in city meets where playgrounds competed against each other in swimming, baseball, and other activities. By 1943, Ramsey Park had six baseball teams: the junior girls, senior girls, junior midget boys, midget boys, senior boys, and even the Mothers' Club team, and placed high in all the swimming meets.



Ramsey Park Mothers' Club Baseball Team
Back Row: 2nd from left Mary Clark, 3rd Mrs. Oertli
Front Row: 2nd from left Lida Parr

Over the years, the Mothers' Club continued Friday night activities for children and families while the park directors also organized many day-time activities such as art lessons, swimming and diving instruction, children's theater, and chorus. The carnival became an annual event. Fundraising continued so that sports equipment and other items could be provided. More activities for adults were organized including square dancing. The use of Ramsey Park peaked in 1953 with 47,082 participants in all activities except swimming, 50,614 swimmers, and an

additional 15,401 spectators. But as the neighborhood children grew up and left, more and more homes were occupied by parents now turned grandparents and there were fewer and fewer children. During the early 1960s, use of the park dropped into 30,000s and finally by 1966 and thereafter, the park usually had about 18,000 participants, 3,000 spectators, but 30,000 swimmers. Even the number of swimmers had dropped to 17,481 by 1984.

The presidents of the Ramsey Park Mothers' Club from 1943 to 1965 when it ceased to exist were: Mrs. G.W. Moody, Mrs. H.H. Howe, Mrs. Ivan Smith, Mrs. Robert Clark, Mrs. Charles Joyce, Mrs. Dora Wilkes, Mrs. Johnny Munson, Mrs. Layton Waxler, Mrs. T.O. Caffey, Mrs. A.E. Leja, Mrs. Bert L. Gentry, Mrs. Archie Webb, and Mrs. Tony Glass.

4314 MARATHON – In 1929, C.S. Eidman purchased 21 lots in Alta Vista from developer Houghton Brownlee for \$100 each, including this lot. In 1955, Eidman sold this lot to the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day saints. Finally, in 1972 or 1973, a “fly-by-night” contractor (according to neighbors) bought a house, cut it in half, and moved both halves from 602 W. 30th Street to this location. It had been built much earlier and still has transoms over front and back doors, 10' high ceilings, hardwood floors, and interior bullseye molding. Neighbor R.J. Stanley poured the concrete porch and sidewalk and built the wire lathe and concrete skirt around the base of the house. The porches inset under a pyramidal roof suggest an early 20th century construction.

4400 SHOALWOOD – As related by Lillian Lindeman –Built in 1940 by Leo E. Watts and his son. Lillian Lindeman had been scouting the neighborhood looking for a lot when she found this corner lot and fell in love with the large live oak tree there. Lillian drew the plans for the house herself making sure no room was square – she preferred rectangular rooms. The house has never been enlarged. When the rock work was underway, probably by Frank Wright, Lillian insisted on having five flat rocks worked into the wall horizontal to the ground so that she could set flowerpots on them. Lillian and her husband, Mark, and his brother, Frank, owned a mayonnaise company. The Everfresh Mayonnaise Company had been started in 1938 by two ladies from the University of Texas (Martha Henricks was one) who had developed the recipe. The Lindemans bought the business, which was located on Manchaca Road, and operated it until 1950. In 1950, they sold their business. Mark Lindeman built a camper on the back of their pickup and they traveled for 22 years, eventually visiting all 50 states. The Lindemans had two sons, Alan and Jack. The House remained in the family until about 1969 when they sold it to Harriet Molinere who had rented it for 22 years.

4400 BELLVUE – As related by Jesse Chrisner – Built in typical Bungalow style in 1944 by Jesse Benson Chrisner for his parents, Cora and Jess Chrisner. The Chrisners bought this lot for \$600. Son Jesse at that time was working at Camp Mabry assembling motors. Jesse was born visually impaired (his mother had measles while carrying him) and could not serve in the military. During the war, he worked at Camp Mabry and in his spare time, he worked on cars for his neighbors and others. As soon as his parents purchased this lot, he and his father went to Capitol City Lumber Company and bought three government wheat storage bins. Capitol City had converted the prefabricated wall sections into building material (they installed windows and doors). The 6” thick walls and floors of this house were sections of bins bolted together. The total cost of the house was \$4,500. Practically no houses were built during the war because there were no building materials available – the use of government bins was quite clever. They bought reject flooring from East End Lumber Company and made it into a nice floor. After the war Jesse went to work for Steck Vaughn as a shipping supervisor working for them for 34 years.

Jesse's mother, Cora, had a sewing shop at 4206 Medical Parkway (now gone) also built by son, Jesse. Cora Bell Moore Chrisner was a seamstress so talented that Neiman-Marcus tried to hire her to make ball gowns for them. Cora used to walk to her shop each morning from her home on Bellvue. She had three Singer treadle sewing machines on which she made clothing (Adams Extract family wore her clothes), ballgowns (Governor Mark White's wife Linda wore one of her gowns), uniforms (she made twirlers and cheerleader costumes for most of the schools). After a robbery attempt, Cora moved her sewing shop to her home into a room built onto the back of the garage. She was 93 when she died in 1987 and in the last two years of her life, she made 31 quilts for her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

In 1947, Jesse and his two brothers, Herman and Bill, built a garage apartment behind the house for their younger brother, Wilfred, who had been badly wounded in the war. Jesse got lumber salvaged from a church. Later, when his mother Cora had to close out her sewing shop, Jesse built her a sewing room on the back of the garage. The house was occupied by the Chrisner family until 1990 and they still own it though it is rented out. The siding and windows are additions. The garage apartment was rented until it burned in late 1994. In 1995, Jesse Chrisner, then 78 years old, rebuilt the garage apartment which he had originally built 48 years earlier. Jesse lives in the sewing room apartment whose walls are now lined with paintings done by Jesse in his spare time.

4418 ROSEDALE – Built in 1941 by Robert Clark for his own homeplace, this house had a



Robert Clark, 1940s

very wide hall with a large closet and each bedroom also had large closets, unusual for the times. The house had two bedrooms both equipped with York window air conditioners, possibly the first in the neighborhood. This house as well as other houses in Rosedale built by Clark had wood floors and a unique storage cupboard above the bathtub which opened through the closet in the adjoining bedroom and was large enough to hold a mattress. The extra large garage held two cars but also had a space in front of the cars for an office for Robert and for a washing machine and three rinse tubs. It was so large that Robert was able to build an airplane in that garage. Robert and a group of flying friends, including Lester Palmer, used to fly early in the morning to some Texas town and have breakfast together and then fly home.

Robert always wore a cap to protect his fair skin and khaki

pants and shirts which Mary ironed until those wonderful pants stretchers were invented allowing pants to dry on the clothesline without wrinkles. Most of the trees and shrubs still surrounding the house were planted by the Clarks. A pink Texas smoke tree stands in the backyard fence row on 45th Street about 3' west of the front fence corner. Native to west and north Texas, the tree gets its name from the spring blossoms which resemble feathers and are pink giving the tree a "smoky" appearance in silhouette. In 1956 the Clarks sold the house.

As related by daughter, Judy Clark Zaleski, and brother, Morris Clark. Robert Clark, born in 1902 in Burnet County near Marble Falls, taught himself the basics of carpentry. He bought a set of books and after studying, worked with builder N.S. Wheless in the 1920s in Austin perfecting his skills. Then he went out on his own. His crew consisted of his cousins, J.W. Smith, McKinley Clark, Rudolph Clark, and Sherwood Clark, all carpenters, and Mark Burnett, a plumber. These men worked well together for many years, laughing and talking constantly, but they could build a house in two months if the weather was nice. Clark bought most of his materials from Calcasieu or Home Lumber companies. He drew the plans for many of the houses he built. When the war shut down building, Clark worked at Hale Airport, maintaining the hangar and also teaching flying. He later built an airplane in his garage in Rosedale. At the end of the war when building resumed, Clark built a number of homes in Rosedale and sold most of them to returning veterans. He also built many houses in Bryker Wood and later, with Murray Graham, in Allandale. In the 1950s, big builders like Nash-Philips-Copus began building a large number of tract houses and gradually squeezed out most of the independent builders. In about 1955, Clark quit building and operated his own hardware store in Allandale Shopping Center. Then he went to work for the University of Texas in the air conditioning plant. He and his wife, Mary, lived in Rosedale for about fifteen years and then built a home in Allandale at 6203 Nasco where they spent the rest of their lives. Clark died in 1992. The houses in Rosedale believed to have been built by Clark are: 4418 Rosedale (his home), 4002 Ramsey (his aunt's home), 4000, 4002, 4004, 4006, 4008, 4009, 4010, 4500, and 4612 Sinclair, 4203, 4403, and 4502 Shoalwood, 4111, 4314, 4406, and 4408 Rosedale, and 4009, 4402, and 4411 Ramsey. He also built additions onto the houses at 4502 Shoalwood, 4004 Sinclair, and 4513 Rosedale.

4419 BELLVUE – As related by Forrest Preece – This home was built in 1925 or 1926 by Jim Preece for his brother, Ed, and wife, Zella Preece. Jim also built a cow shed behind the house with a spring-hinged door which would slam shut by itself. Ed Preece, along with many Rosedale residents, made beer at home during Prohibition and the Depression. One summer, Ed made some home brew, bottled and capped it, and stored the bottles in a pile of cotton seed hulls in the cow shed. The bottles were place with the caps pointing toward the door. Ed went into the shed one hot day letting the door slam behind him and the bottles started popping, sending caps and fizzing beer shooting directly at Ed. He battled his way out and waited. When the commotion stopped, he retrieved the still-capped bottles of beer and took them to brother Jim's house at 4212 Medical Parkway where they were put into the ice box. Unfortunately, at least one of the bottles blew up and all the milk in the ice box had to be thrown out. Ed's nephew, Forrest, shares his recipe for beer: 2 quarts Pabst Blue Ribbon malt, 2 yeast cakes, 10lbs. sugar, and enough water to fill within 4" of top of a 15 gallon keg. Mix, cover with cloth and let stand. On third day test with specific gravity tester and if ready, bottle and cap. You'll have lots of friends while the beer lasts.

4419 SINCLAIR – As related by Verna Pickle Warwick land Willie Belle Coker – This Bungalow style home was built in March-November, 1936 by Robert L. Pickle and contractor W.G. Bailey. Pickle sold to Roy Durham in November, 1936, and it went through three other owners until in July, 1947, present owners, the Garland Coker family purchased the home. The

home was built in the typical Pickle style with double brick walls covered with plaster inside and stucco outside. It has a number of special touches like the round portholes in the living room on each side of the fireplace. A brick garage was also built in 1936 but a second garage was added later. In 1950, the Cokers hired Hayes Hoffelder to construct an additional bedroom and bath on the back of the house. Garland Coker worked for the Texas Highway Department for many years while his wife, Willie Belle, typed manuscripts for famous Texas author, J. Frank Dobie, for twelve years. Daughter, Susie, started a newspaper for the neighborhood when she was nine years old and continued in the summers for five years.

ROSEDALE IN WORLD WAR II

On December 7, 1941, life in Rosedale changed. Soon after our country's entrance into World War II, building stopped in the neighborhood. Many families living here had blackout curtains and victory gardens. Some from the neighborhood were in the armed forces and many, both men and women, worked in defense jobs. Some worked at the magnesium plant which extracted materials for incendiary bombs. Others worked at Bergstrom Air Force Base or Camp Swift in Bastrop where German prisoners-of-war were held. Stores in the neighborhood saw that regular customers (neighbors) had a better chance of getting rationed goods (sugar, coffee, meat, gasoline). The Rosedale School P.T.A. and the Ramsey Park Mothers' Club sold war bonds, the scout troops who met at the school collected newspapers for recycling.

There were one or two in the neighborhood who were not cheering for the Allies. One German-speaking homebuilder in the late 1930s used to bring a radio to the job site so he could listen to Hitler's speeches. And one morning the carpools heading from Rosedale to the magnesium plant were all talking about an F.B.I. raid on one house in the neighborhood where electronic spying equipment was found.

VIC ELAM: "In June, 1942, I went into the army air corps. First they sent me to air craft mechanic training school at Sheppard Field in Wichita Falls and then to the Douglas aircraft plant school in Santa Monica, California. From there, I went to Columbia Air Force base in South Carolina where I joined my group – the 345th Bomb Group, 498th Squadron. They had already been there and in training for a while. They sent us by cattle train back across the country to California where they loaded us on the slowest ship the Navy owned – a 1904 ship that saw service in World War I – and it took 30 days just to get to Australia. From there we went to the Jackson Air Drome at Fort Moresby in New Guinea. This was where our planes started flying missions.

"Usually they flew early in the morning. I was a mechanic in the ground crew. Each plane had two mechanics assigned to it. So we would get up before daylight and preflight the airplanes, top off the gas tanks, get everything prepared. The armors loaded the bombs and handled the guns, not us. They would take off and sometimes be gone 6 or 8 hours. If it was a short mission, we would wait on the field till they came back. Waiting – that was the worst part, sweating it out. We usually knew ahead of time by radio contact if we had lost somebody or if the planes were badly shot up. We didn't have too much of that. Our planes were B-25s, called 'Billy Mitchells.' Our planes were armed with ten fixed forward firing 50 caliber machine guns plus bomb load. They were called strafers that operated at tree top height over the target.

"Those were the real heroes, those guys that flew hours and hours behind enemy lines. The first crew we lost in combat landed OK in a swampy area at a pond. The others circled briefly and saw our men. The next day, they went back and dropped supplies. But those men were never seen or heard from again. Our Bomb Group flew 9,120 strike sorties and lost 720 men.

"When the planes came in, we started to work repairing them. Sometimes we had to change an engine. We had tinsmiths that could patch holes and cracks. Our inspectors would go over them and point out damage. And then there were 25hr., 50hr., and 100hr. flying time inspections, too. There were first 16 planes in each squadron and later 18. Most planes could be repaired.

“The reason why people at home didn’t have a lot of things is because we had them. We had a supply depot full of parts and supplies, even paint. Some of the mechanics were real talented. One especially was an Iowa Indian boy named Puchetonequa (Pushy for short). He would draw the outlines and we would help paint our insignias on our planes. Ours was a falcon. We slept in large tents 16’ X 16’ that would hold 6 or 8 guys. We had a mess hall that could be erected or taken down quickly by our carpenters – we used a tent if we weren’t going to be in one place very long. The cooks had gasoline stoves and they had gone to cooking school.

“Once when I was on Liberty ship in the Philippines, Japanese kamikaze crashed into our ship. My squadron was sitting on #4 hold playing pinochle and it hit #5 hold and wiped out about 60 men of the 500th Squadron. Between them and us were some mobile refrigeration trailers that absorbed most of the shrapnel but about 12 of the 498th were killed anyway.

“We went from New Guinea to Biak Island and then to the Philippines – Dulag, Leyte, Luzon. We were on Ie Shima when the Japanese said they would surrender. The Japanese delegation was to fly to Ie Shima in white aircraft with green surrender crosses and then board a transport for Manila where MacArthur would meet them. The 345th Bomb Group was chosen to meet the surrender planes and escort them to Ie Shima. The official escort missed the surrender planes and a couple of our planes ended up escorting them in (one from the 498th Squadron and one from the 499th Squadron of the 345th Bomb Group – Air Apaches). We were all out on the airstrip when they came down. We saw the Japanese when they came to surrender. At the reunion in 1994, I won a copy of the painting of our two planes meeting up with the two surrender planes.

“We were discharged in October. We left our planes right there. I never knew what happened to the planes. Our combat crews got to go home after 50 combat missions but we stayed so there were none of the original ones still with us – pilots, gunners, navigators, or radio operators. I think we went through three sets of those. Anyway, we came home in 7 days on the I.I. Nelson and landed in Ft. Louis, Washington.” Vic and Vada Elam live at 4616 Shoalwood

EUGENE BAKER: “I had been in the drug business most of my life and when I went into the army in October, 1942, I thought they would put me in the medics. But after the aptitude tests, they put me in communications. I was sent to Camp Barkley in Abilene and spent 90 days being trained to be a radio technician. I was put in the 915th Field Artillery Battalion, 90th Infantry Division. We also trained in the Mohave Desert at Camp Young in Arizona and in the swamp at Leesville, Louisiana. We left New York in April, 1944, and sailed to England on the Athlone Castle, a mail ship. After a little more training in Davenport, we went on to Abergavenny, Wales. On May 30, my jeep and I were loaded on a boat with the 4th Division. That jeep got petted like a dog – it had my radio equipment. I waterproofed that jeep three times.

“On June 6, 1944, by 10 AM, we landed on Utah Beach in France. I was with infantry and they walked ashore, but I drove my jeep. The water was up on my chest. When you see the 4th Infantry Division listed as making the D Day landing, I was the only member of the 915th Field Artillery that first day. My job was to get set up so I could direct my unit ashore on the third day. From then on, I was on the front lines as an observer for the artillery – I would radio back and tell them where fire was needed. We went through France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, and Czechoslovakia and met the Russian troops at Prague.

“A Wyoming cowboy was my driver and he used to jump out and make two cups of coffee on a little burner when we could stop. One time, when I had to get out of the jeep and relieve myself,

another tech moved over into my seat and he got shop in the head and jaw. I was on the front lines the whole time and I was never hit. After Germany surrendered in May, I served about six months in the occupation of Germany before being shipped home in November, 1945.” Eugene Baker and his family live at 4905 Shoal Creek Blvd.

MARGARET FAUBION WHITE: “The second and third years of Rosedale School, we in America became involved in World War II. For three days, classes were dismissed and the teachers spent the day registering men ages 18 to 45, for Army duty. There were sad days for us because many of the men were fathers of children we had in school and we knew some of them would soon be going off to war.

“One morning all the teachers and their pupils crowded into one room and listened to the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, speaking over the radio describing to Congress and our country, situations that had pulled our country into war. It took only a few minutes to declare war against our enemies. There was a breathless quiet in the room when we heard our President say: ‘I now declare our country, the United States of American, in a state of war.’ His message was also heard around the world where people had radios.

“Soon after this, we closed the school again for two or three days to issue the people food stamp books. We were allowed only a certain amount of groceries according to the size of the family. Soon after this we issued gasoline stamp books. All this was because our allies needed food and we needed gasoline for war machines.

“Children brought scrap iron to school which was needed to make war machinery. Every home in the community planted a ‘victory’ garden in order to have an abundance of food.” From an interview by Mrs. Roberta Hartung with Mrs. White, 1966. Mrs. White lived at 2212 W. 49th Street and was principal of Rosedale School.

BERNICE MUELLER HOLLE: “We were listening to the radio one Sunday afternoon when President Roosevelt said, ‘We are in a state of war.’ It made our hearts stop! My husband, Lonnie, and I with our six months old son, Gene, had just moved to Austin. It was difficult to find a house here so we moved in with my mother and dad (Mollie and Henry Mueller) and sister, Genevieve, who earlier had rented a home from the Derr’s at 4302 Medical Parkway (it was called Alice Avenue in that day). With America going to war, my dad worked for the navy and was sent to White Sands Proving Grounds in New Mexico. Lonnie volunteered for the army with the engineers. He trained at Fort Hood and could come home for weekends. He usually brought home three or four couples with him because they were from other states. They felt our house was home in Texas. So every weekend Mom and I cooked and washed for these service people, part of my war effort! After about five months, Lonnie was sent to Fort Ord and then to the Pacific.

“One time when my dad had been visiting, he and Mr. Champion (an Austin neighbor who worked at White Sands) were going back to White Sands on the train. It was so crowded that they sat on the platform of the train with their legs hanging over the edge holding a young woman and her baby on their laps until they found room in the train for her. She was trying to visit her husband at White Sands. All means of transportation were crowded with service people being transferred from one place to another.

“Before the men left, they put in a large garden for us. Nearly everyone had ‘Victory Gardens.’ We grew a variety of vegetables which Mom would can and dry for later. A number of items

were rationed; sugar was one so you were very careful in using it. Gas was also rationed so we would walk to Warren's Grocery and Burnet Road and other places to save our little bit of gas. Nobody had much money but we didn't need to buy much food. We got most of our meat from my grandmother and folks living in the country. They had 'Meat Clubs' in the country. People would raise an animal and each week one family would butcher and divide with other club members. Each week you would take some part of the meat for your family. You might get a ham one time and ribs the next. Bless my grandmother for sharing with us.

RATIONING AT A GLANCE

SUGAR— Stamp No. 13 valid for five pounds until midnight August 15.

CANNING SUGAR— Stamps 15 and 16 in Ration Book One valid for 5 pounds of sugar each through Oct. 31, 1943. Those needing additional sugar for canning may apply to local rationing boards.

COFFEE— Stamp No. 24 in Book No. 1 (for those 14 or older on the date the book was issued) valid for 1 pound of coffee through June 30.

SHOES— Stamp No. 17 in Book No. 1 good for 1 pair of shoes through June 15. Stamp No. 18 becomes valid June 16 for 1 pair of shoes.

MEATS, EDEBLE FATS and OILS, (including butter), CHEESE, CANNED FISH— Each holder of Book 2 allowed 16 points per week. Red Stamps J, K, L, M, and N, expire June 30 and become valid as follows: L, June 6; M, June 13; and N, June 20.

PROCESSED FOODS— Blue K, L, and M stamps (48 points) valid through July 7.

MILEAGE RATIONING

GASOLINE— Value of each coupon in A, B and C books is 4 gallons. A Book Coupons No. 6 expire midnight July 21.
All applications for renewal of Gas Ration Books must be accompanied by Tire Inspection Record.

TIRE INSPECTION— All "A" book holders must have second official tire inspection by Sept. 30, 1943. Subsequent inspections for A book holders will be once every six months. "B" book holders must have second official tire inspection by June 30, 1943. "C" book holders must have third official tire inspection by August 31, 1943. Next official tire inspection for "T" book holders must be made within 5,000 miles of last inspection or within six months, whichever occurs first.

TIRES— If official tire inspector recommends a tire replacement, apply to local ration board for the tire ration certificate. Tires will be rationed to all on the basis of tire inspections and county quotas available with most essential mileage to come first. Recaps can now be secured without rationing certificates.

Rationing notice from newspaper

“We had about 20 chickens and a cow named ‘Jene’ that we bought for milk for little Gene. Mom would make our butter. I’d stake that cow all over the neighborhood in empty lots and in the park. I carried an ax to drive the stake in and once I missed and still have the scar on my knee. Now Jene had a little calf, and Grandmother was to take the calf to the farm near Brenham. With gasoline and tires rationed, they didn’t get to Austin. Rosemary Wolfe, a neighbor, and I decided we could put this little calf in the back seat of my car. We’d get her in and get the door closed only to find she’d be out the other side of the car. We finally got her to the farm. However, that left the cow ‘Jene.’ Mrs. Dye, our next door neighbor, was to milk her when Mom was out of town, but once Mrs. Dye was called to Dallas leaving me to milk. I was born and raised in Los Angeles and I didn’t know how to milk a cow. I tried and I cried and poor Jene cried. I finally went door to door and found a lady to milk her. Next day I found some people who lived out Burnet Road to come get her.

“A number of times during the war, troops bivouacked in Ramsey Park. There would be 15 or 20 pup tents set up for a night or two and Army vehicles parked around the park. You couldn’t buy things like appliances and cars. I had an early 1940 Ford, four door. I would hit the side of the motor with a long handled ax to get it started. With gas shortage, you walked a lot. However, shoes were also rationed so you took good care of them. We always looked forward to the Rosedale Carnival. My neighbor Rosemary loved to bake pies so together we baked pies for the school to auction at the carnival. I’d get dewberries from the country but we were stingy with the sugar. We also collected newspapers for the war effort and turned them in at Rosedale school.

“When Lonnie was stationed on Okinawa, by chance he came across the grave of the husband of one of our neighbors that lived across the street from King’s Florist. He took pictures for the widow and her little daughter. He used to put a money order in a letter each month and send it to me but someone stole every one of them. Since he had never told me he was sending them, he didn’t know till he came home that I never got a one.

“When Gene was four years old, I went to work for Scarbroughs as a clerk. I earned \$13.50 a week. I only worked there a few weeks when Gene was hit by a pickup truck. He was on the sidewalk in front of King’s Florist when a young boy was distracted and jumped the curb. The bumper hit Gene’s head. The doctor gave me no hope he’d survive. We tried to locate his dad but Lonnie was at sea. It was two months before he knew of Gene’s condition. The war had caused the development of a solution to wash the brain of wounded soldiers. Our doctor had the Navy to send this solution from a hospital in San Diego to wash bone fragments from our son’s head. It saved his life. A year later Gene had to have surgery to plate his head. By this time, the war was over. I asked our Representative Lyndon Johnson for his help in getting Lonnie home before the surgery. He did get to Austin in time and the operation was a complete success. When Dad came back from White Sands, he and Mother bought the house at 5000 Lynnwood. Now one of my sons and his family live there. My grandchildren are the fourth generation of our family to live in Rosedale. I have lived at 4600 Sinclair for 42 years.”

FORREST “TODDY” PREECE: “In November, 1942, I went to work for the magnesium plant – International Minerals and Chemicals. Magnesium was used for thermal bombs. We dropped them on Tokyo and like to have burnt the whole place up over there. We shipped it up to Dallas and they made the thermal bombs out of it. We used dolomite from up at Burnet or Marble Falls or somewhere up in there – pink rock. It had magnesium in it. They shipped it down here in railway cars and dumped it in a below-the-ground hopper. We had a big conveyor

that took it up about 100' in the air and dropped it down in the conveyor. The conveyor dropped it down in a big furnace – big revolving furnace. That thing was about 200' long. Big thing. It was lined with fire brick. The brick would get too hot and fall out so they had to shut it down and replace the brick sometimes.

“They'd put the carbon back into it under pressure in big tanks. They had some 150 horsepower motors that kept that stuff stirring in those tanks. We had to replace one of those motors one time. We carried railroad ties on our backs up about three or four stories and set that motor on temporarily and fastened it to the ground. Finally, we had to fasten it to the concrete. Drilled holes and melted sulfur and poured around the bolts. It could spin those fans so fast that it would force that carbon dioxide into that liquid. From there, the conveyor took it to the slaker building. And then the boiling kettles. From the kettles, it went to the drying shelf to dry out. They then moved it on enclosed conveyors to the mag cells. They had these big cast iron metal pots – at least 4" thick metal. The kettles were gas fired underneath and then they would let these electrodes down in the liquid that was boiling. Big electrodes 8" in diameter and so slick you had to handle them with a piece of wood trimmed to fit in the holes. They had connector threads that would connect two together. Every now and then some boys – this was all they did – would pull those things up with a chain hoist and knock the ends off where they burned badly and then let them back down. They would seal around them with asbestos putty until they'd burn out again. I think there were five or six electrodes to each pot. Those pots were about 18' long but only about 6' wide.

“The old transformer building changed the alternating current to direct current for those electrodes. Everything was magnetized. You'd reach in your pocket for a nail and they'd all come out stuck together.

“The magnesium plant furnished our clothes, jumpsuits. You couldn't have afforded to furnish your own. They had their own laundry and several ladies from the neighborhood worked in the laundry. Mrs. Dewey Johnson (on Bellvue) and Mrs. Joe Magee; she was actually Miss Johnnie Willie then. She lived on Marathon near 40th. Ceola Spillar worked in the laundry, too. She married Farrell Stewart and lived on 38th Street.

“Mr. Hugo Neitsch (4517 Sinclair) and Rudolph, my brother, came to work at the magnesium plant after they got through at Bergstrom Field. I was getting about \$1.35 an hour and they had been getting \$3.00 an hour. Mr. Joe O'Connor (4707 Sinclair) worked in the office, in the chemical section. We had Percy Harris (4808 Sinclair) – his wife as a school teacher. We had carpools and he rode in the car with us. Mr. Bemus Jackson lived down there on Ramsey (4619). Little Emil Machu lived at 4619 Shoalwood. Mr. Bob Pickle (4715 Sinclair) worked out there and Mr. Harry Wentz who lived up there on Sinclair (4713). Wentz was a welder and Bob worked in productions, I believe. I was in maintenance and got to do everything. I was a carpenter and painted and sandblasted, worked with asbestos, anything they told you to do. We had some pretty good ole boys, some of them were waiting the draft, you know. They wouldn't have me, though. I went up for a physical but they turned me down – 4F, bad knees.

“They shut down the magnesium plant in July, 1945. Emil and I were two of the last ones out there. Then they turned it over to the guards. Mr. Charles Schuck (4619 Sinclair) was a guard there and he stayed on as night watchman for a long time after it was shut down. That was an interesting job. I'm glad I got to work at it. Of course, I'd rather have been there than over in Europe, freezing and getting shot at like my little brother, Calvin.

“During the war, it was rumored that there was an illegal shortwave radio station somewhere in the neighborhood. They finally zeroed in on it and it was at the corner of 44th and Ramsey. The fella there had a very high-powered rig all fixed up and he was sending messages right along to Germany – coded, of course. They put him out of business. The F.B.I. got him. It was never in the paper. But I had a friend named Jackson (4310 Ramsey) that lived in the second house from him that worked at the magnesium plant with us. He rode in our carpool. He was the one that told us about it.” Forrest and Florence Preece live at 4703 Sinclair Avenue.

4502 and 4524 BURNET ROAD – As related by C.E. “Scoot” Person – In the late 1930s, one of the Ramsey sisters who platted the Rosedale Subdivision, Jessie and her husband, Vincent Murray, built on this corner lot inherited by Jessie, a filling station building. Conoco leased the building and the first dealer to operate the station was Scoot Pearson. When he opened, his nearest competitor was at 45th and Guadalupe. Person purchased gas from Conoco which was delivered by large tank truck. Gas sold for 17 or 18 cents per gallon. Pearson would pump the gas, clean the windshield, check water and oil, sweep the car floors, and air the tires. When World War II began, Pearson worked at Kelly Field in San Antonio until 1943 when he went into the army. On July 1, 1946, he reopened the station and remained in business until June, 1962. When he retired, gas was selling for 31 cents a gallon and the only government regulation required that gas be put in metal containers with a lid. After 1962, Humble and later Phillips 66 leased the station until it closed permanently in 1993.

When Scoot first opened the station in 1939, he was renting the garage apartment at 4602 Burnet Road (beside Bark and Purr). In 1941, he purchased the house at 4524 recently completed by builder Leo E. Watts and his son, Ralph. The rock work was done by Frank Wright. In 1946, neighbor Joe Lusby planted the sycamore trees for the Pearsons and in 1963 Pearson planted the pecan tree. Scoot and his wife, Hilda, still occupy the home which has not been significantly altered.

As related by son, Ralph K. Watts – Leo Watts was born in 1885 in Missouri but went to Los Angeles at an early age. He did not learn carpentry from his father but he learned as a young man and worked on Rudolph Valentino’s house while in California. He moved to Palestine, Texas, in the early 1930s where he had a cabinet shop. In May, 1937, he, wife Mary, and their children moved to Austin. Leo began building houses with 17-year-old son, Ralph, as a carpenter and often using Frank Wright for rock or brick work. The Watts designed and drew the plans for many houses they built. Leo and Mary lived in several of their houses in Rosedale: 4513 Rosedale, 4612 Burnet Road, and 4812 Shoalwood. Ralph and his wife, Nell Moon from Elgin, lived in another house they built at 4524 Burnet Road when they married in 1941. With the beginning of World War II, Ralph went into the service. Leo was able to do some building during the war by buying used lumber but he worked at the magnesium plant most of the war. After the war, Ralph and Leo worked together for two years until Ralph went to work for Travis Cook and J.W. Gregg at Austin Building Materials, a lumber yard and building company. After 25 years with this company, Ralph and his two sons, Wayne and Ron, began building as Ralph K. Watts Builders which today builds homes all over Austin including the prestigious Bella Vista. Leo died in 1962 in Palestine but was working up until only a few months before his death. The Watts built many homes in Rosedale, Allandale, Shoalmont, Country Club, Skyland Terrace, Mayfair Terrace, and Tarrytown. Houses in Rosedale believed to have been built by the Watts include: 4516, 4518, 4520, 4522, 4524, 4612, and 4618 Burnet Road, 4503 (for A.C. Bryant), 4513, and 4515 Rosedale, 4306, 4400, 4809, and 4812 Shoalwood, 4600 and 4611 Shoal Creek Boulevard, and 4707 Ramsey.

2500 GREAT OAKS PARKWAY – As related by John and Esther Bieseles – This house was built in 1954 by builder H. Symank who lived in it for four years before moving to Georgetown. In 1958, John and his first wife, Marguerite McAfee, purchased the property. Marguerite was attracted to the large trees and quiet street. Symank had built a double fireplace serving living room and den and a sheltered patio in the house. The Bieseles converted the garage into a library in the 1970s. John, a naturalist and professor of zoology at the University of Texas for 20 years, was interested in what was growing on the 2/3 acre behind the house. In the 1960s, he purchased the lot and has allowed it to remain in a natural state. Among the native plants there are live oak, hackberry, mountain cedar, Mexican buckeye, redbud, mountain laurel, cherry laurel, algerito and a mustang grape vine originally from John's grandparents' house in New Braunfels. All of John's great-grandparents were born in Germany and emigrated to Texas 1845-1860. Marguerite's father, Almer McDuffy McAfee, was a chemist for Gulf Oil Company in Port Arthur and was engaged in catalytic cracking of petroleum. John and Marguerite had three children: Megan, Diana, and Elizabeth Jane. John and his second wife, Esther, continue to occupy the home.

4616 RAMSEY – As related by Bill and Russell Brown – In June, 1939, Frank Benoit purchased this lot for \$300. W.A. Colvin's name is on the mechanic's lien for the construction of a house and garage costing \$3,500: "a five-room and bath rock veneer house together with two car box garage." Benoit sold the house and lot to Walter and Florence Wray in 1940 and they owned it until 1960 when Lillian Myers purchased the house. When this house was built, one half had sheetrock with a thick rough stucco finish while the other half had shiplap walls for wallpaper. It has a large arched doorway between living and dining areas. This especially nice Tudor Revival home has the typical arched entry, gabled-roof with sweeping curvilinear profile, buttresses on each side of the front, decorative screens, and a large chimney.

4715 SINCLAIR – As related by Marvin DeGlandon and Pete Walter – In 1969, DeGlandon and Walter rented this home from builder/owner Robert Pickle and liked it so much that the next year they purchased it. The home was built in 1941 by Robert Pickle for his homeplace and has many special touches. The front plaster shutters with a star in raised relief, the black wrought iron gate beside the house, the back patio tiles with names of the Pickle family and religious sayings are all original and carefully preserved. Inside, the house sports coved ceilings, wall niches, tiny blue and white hexagon tiles in the bathroom, and even a coved tub enclosure with storage above. But unlike some Pickle houses, door and window trim both inside and out are wood, and the fireplace is made of brick. During the years that the Pickles lived here, a back bedroom was added and the floor under another bedroom was reinforced to hold a motorized bed used by Ilia Pickle during her twelve-year illness. The Pickles landscaped with fruitless pomegranate, crape myrtle, poinsettia, birdbaths, fence murals and barbecue pit (both now gone), and some cuttings of Blaze roses from the Austin State Hospital grounds given to them by hospital employee and neighbor, Mr. Morrow. Pete and Marvin have added yucca, ferns, hibiscus, barberry, rosemary, dwarf bottlebrush and salvia. This yard and house are always perfectly manicured and maintained.

As related by daughter, Verna Pickle Warwick – Robert L. Pickle was born in 1909 in Ashland, Oklahoma, to Zelah Vaughn and Robert Pickle, farmers from Mississippi. Robert attended Oklahoma A&M but had to drop out as the Depression deepened. In 1934, He and his wife's brother, Lester Conlisk, decided to try to find work in Texas. When they reached Austin, Robert found work at the Federal Bakery downtown as a deliveryman and sent for his wife, Ilia, and their children. As soon as his father-in-law, builder Arlie Conlisk, arrived in Austin, they began constructing houses. Arlie taught son-in-law, Robert Pickle, his own construction techniques:

thick brick walls with plaster inside and cement stucco outside as well as basic carpentry skills.



Robert Pickle, 1930s

One of the first houses they built was for the growing Pickle family at 53 Chalmers. The flood of 1935 almost completely covered this house but did not harm it. Meanwhile, Pickle designed and built two houses on Haskell in the same style as his own home: brick walls, stuccoed outside and plastered inside, with a flat roof. In 1936, he completed a house at 4419 Sinclair and had it for sale when flood threatened again. The family lived here for several months before returning to Chalmers. But in 1941, he finished building another family home on higher ground at 4715 Sinclair.

Both Arlie and Lester Conlisk left Austin in the mid 1940s. Pickle continued to work with a large crew, including at times Fred Helms, Nathan Brown, and Leo Lopez. He built several homes in Crestview, Brentwood, University Park, Highlands, North Loop Terrace, and Enfield, numerous church additions, and an occasional swimming pool. When A.C. Bryant got the contract to build 7-11 grocery stores all over Austin, Pickle subcontracted several stores and built the 7-11 which served Rosedale at 5101 Burnet Road. He would also do plaster work for other contractors, such as the interior of the Brown Building downtown. Pickle's wife, Ilia, died in 1966. He later married widow, Lena Lewis Phipps, who taught at the Blind School; both retired in the late 1970s. Houses in Rosedale believed to have been built by Pickle are 4415 Rosedale, 4515 Shoalwood, and 4419, 4617, 4707, 4713, 4715, 4810, and 4812 Sinclair and he helped build 4401 (with the Preeces) and 4502 (with Lester Conlisk) Sinclair. All of his houses in Rosedale have the distinctive double brick wall with space between, plastered inside, stuccoed outside, and often are adorned with stucco "shutters," round windows, arches, coved ceilings and

keyhole doorways. In the mid-1950s, Pickle experimented with a product called permastone on exteriors but went back to cement stucco.

4811 SINCLAIR – THE MOORE-HANCOCK FARMSTEAD – Celebrating 150 years – Martin and Elizabeth Moore are forgotten pioneers of the city of Austin. Moore and his partner were Austin's first mercantilists and both Martin and Elizabeth were among only a handful of people who stayed in Austin during the three years it was nearly abandoned (1842-1845). Their home in Rosedale is Austin's only log residence still on its original site and, at 150 years, is one of the oldest structures still standing. Nothing was known about this old farmstead until 1989 when the Collins began research into its history. The story has been pieced together from hundreds of individual bits of information from courthouses, libraries, archives, old newspapers, interviews, and from the grounds and buildings themselves through archeological investigation.

Elizabeth Ann, second eldest daughter of Gideon White, married the brash young Irishman named Martin Moore in 1844 in the nearly deserted town of Austin. Martin Moore had arrived in 1839 when Austin was being laid out and started the first mercantile business in the new capitol city. He built a store with second-floor living quarters on East 6th Street but soon moved with his wife to a 20-acre tract near the future site of the French Legation. In 1842 when Mexican troops invaded Texas again, Martin joined Captain George M. Dolson's company of Minute Men and marched to San Antonio. He was later selected by citizens of Austin to negotiate the reopening of the land office in Austin. Citizens of Austin had refused to let the land office records leave hoping thereby to force the government to eventually return to Austin and that is what happened in 1845. By 1842, Moore had several competitors in the mercantile business (including Lamar Moore, no relation), but during the three years the government had been absent from Austin, Moore seems to have been the only mercantile in business. He allowed the land office to charge expenses during that time. From those records and others in the State Archives, we know he was selling window glass, fabric for clothes, nails, rope, food staples, fever pills, knives, candles, ink, shoes, and many other items.

Some of our best information on Martin Moore, however, came from the criminal court files. Moore was indicted several times for selling liquor, playing cards or allowing card playing in his business, and fighting. He was not shy about suing to collect a debt; he sued seven times and won every time. By 1849, Martin's store had allowed him to accumulate enough money to build a house in the country on land inherited by his wife (4811 Sinclair). When Elizabeth inherited the tract, it was worth one dollar an acre (\$521). The Moore built a house, outbuildings, fences, purchased enough land to gain access to water in Hancock branch, and stocked their farm well. When they moved to their country home in 1849, Martin began raising fine horses. Moore seems to have been a rock mason and there are two sources which state that Moore got the contract to build the foundation of the 1853 capitol building using limestone from the old Davis quarry farther out Burnet Road (where Northwest Park now sits). The capitol building itself was actually built and finished out by others, including A.E. Moore (no relation) from Bastrop.

In 1855 drought set in and for the next two years, there was almost complete failure of crops. And then the winter of 1856-57 was so severe that thousands of cattle died. But during these bad years, Moore actually increased his herds from 30 horses and 60 cattle in 1855 to 36 horses and 80 cattle in 1857. At his death in 1859, Moore had 145 cattle (including 5 yoke of oxen), 55 horses, 21 hogs, and several thousand acres of land in Hays, Burnet, and San Patricio counties in addition to his acreage in Travis County. Elizabeth had inherited several slaves but she sold them and later purchased one woman, Harriet, to help her with the children and house. Martin had not owned slaves until he moved to the country and then he purchased Renty who helped

him with the stock. When he died, Martin and Elizabeth's community property was appraised at about \$10,000. But in addition to that, Elizabeth's separate property (the 521 acres in Rosedale, her slave Harriet, and a gold watch and chain) amounted to nearly \$10,000 and Martin had another \$2,000 in separate property. Together they had an estate worth over \$22,000. Martin and Elizabeth had five children by the time Martin was killed by one of his horses in 1859.

Of the Moore's five children, the oldest two are the only ones to have made a place in history for themselves. The eldest, Kate, married Austinite Ben Thompson, one of the most famous gunfighters (but never an outlaw) in the United States. Contemporary friend and chronicler of Ben Thompson's life, W.W. Walton, said of Kate that she was "a most estimable lady, the daughter of Mr. Martin Moore, a well-to-do farmer who resided near the city." Ben was born in England but arrived in Austin as a child. He was in the Confederate army during the Civil War and became a target for Federal troops stationed in Austin following the war. Kate's brother, Jimmy, had been run out of Austin by Ben during the War after he stole from his own mother, Mrs. White, who was living in the log house on Sinclair at the time. After the war, Jimmy returned and this time roughed up his sister, Ben's wife. Ben chased Jimmy, shooting around him to hurry him along but a shot accidentally grazed Jimmy in the side. Federal authorities were delighted to arrest Ben and illegally tried him in a military court rather than a civil one. He was convicted and sentenced to the state prison in Huntsville. Ben Thompson is said to have killed 30 men (I can only verify eight), always in self defense, but this incident with Jimmy brought on the only time Ben ever was tried, convicted and served time. Ben was acquainted with several famous gunfighters and gamblers including Wild Bill Hickock, Bat Masterson and Phil Coe. When Ben and Coe were operating a saloon in Kansas, Kate and their two children joined him. But a wagon accident cost beautiful Kate an arm and she and children returned to Austin. In the 1880s, citizens of Austin elected him their marshal and for the year he served, Austin was never quieter. He and his friend, King Fisher, another gunfighter turned lawman, were ambushed and killed in San Antonio in 1884. Kate's brother Jimmy became a prominent gambler and then a cocaine addict who died a pauper in Austin. Kate's mother, Elizabeth Moore, continued to live on their farmstead at 4811 Sinclair until the end of the Civil War when she sold to neighbor, John Hancock.

When Hancock was first starting out as a lawyer and district judge, he purchased land in the Spier league just west and north of Martin Moore. He built a log house and made other improvements to the land in 1853-1854 (this house is gone). Hancock was a Unionist and during the first two years of the Civil War, he practiced in the state courts but refused to practice in the Confederate courts. After being threatened with compulsory military service in the Confederate army, he left Austin in fear of his life. He sat out the rest of the war in New Orleans which was under Union control. After the war he purchased the Moore farm which became part of a 4,000 acre farm owned by Hancock. Hancock did not live in the log house purchased from Elizabeth Moore but he had numerous slaves freed by the Civil War who had no place to go. One of those slaves, Orange Hancock, moved his wife, Rhody, and daughter, Emma, into the old Moore house. They lived here for about four years during which time Emma went to school for the first time. About 1870, Hancock's two nephews, James and William, who had been raised by John, moved into the old Moore house and started a dairy operation. Both James and William had served in the Union Army during the War. John, meanwhile, built a large home called The Oaks (later used by the Brown School) just north of where Luby's Cafeteria now stands. John also raised fine horses and frequently raced them. Surprisingly, he allowed his race horses to pull the dairy wagon used by James and William in the dairy operation.



Orange Hancock (photo courtesy of Leroy J. Wormley Jr. and family)

John Hancock was a strong, out-spoken, progressive man. He was one of the first to raise wheat in Austin and also grew large quantities of sweet potatoes. At one time he owned 500 sheep and

68 mules as well as a herd of dairy cattle. He imported English sparrows believing they would eat the cotton boll weevil. He was involved in building railroads and attempting to dam the Colorado River. He and nine others purchased land and formed the State Fair Association which held annual fairs on the fairground in what later became Hyde Park. And he helped settle the University of Texas in Austin. Following the Civil War, Hancock was one of the few political figures who could take the oath required of United States Congressmen (that he had never borne arms against the United States) and thus he became part of the Texas delegation in the House of Representatives. He served a total of four terms in the 1870s and 1880s. While he was in Washington, his nephews, William and James, managed his farming operation.

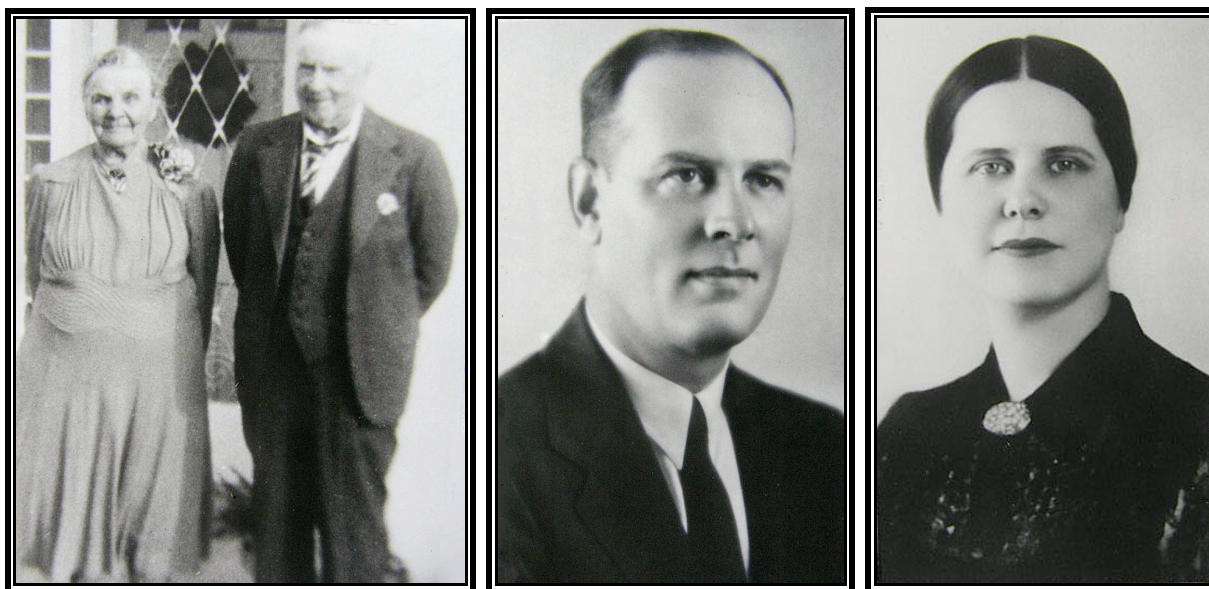
John lived past his mind and by 1890 his son, Edwin, was handling all his affairs. Edwin had married a German girl, Marie Fiset, and her brother, Franz, had been brought to Austin and educated at UT as a lawyer. Franz handled the Hancock estate and eventually purchased the old Hancock dairy tract and the log farmstead on Sinclair Avenue from the estate. Franz held this land only two years and then sold half of it to the Peterson family and the other half to John and Hulda Wallis. Franz gained notoriety following the first world war when investments he had made in Germany proved worthless and he committed suicide.

The Wallises were both immigrants, he from England and she from Sweden. They had no other family in this country and no children. They operated a dairy here for nearly 30 years. About 1910, they hired Will Peterson to update the log house and he enclosed all the log walls in new siding, both inside and outside. They still lived modestly, having no kitchen stove, no running water in the



Franz Fiset

house, no indoor bathroom, no electricity. They were reclusive partly because their five large dogs (pit bulls and airedales) discouraged visitors. As the Wallises aged, they sold their land to Winnie Ramsey and her husband, Hilliare Nitschke, who had befriended them. Winnie was one of three sisters who had developed the Rosedale A through F subdivisions south of 45th Street.



Hulda and John Wallis, Hilliare and Winnie Ramsey Nitschke

At the Wallises' deaths in 1952, the Nitschkes, who developed the Wallis land as Rosedale G and H north of 45th Street, sold the house and outbuildings to Harry Newton, landscape architect and head of the Austin Parks Department. Newton added several rooms including five bathrooms and four kitchens and made the farmstead into a four-family rental complex. Newton was an eccentric and liked old things. He brought many old windows and doors, bathtubs and toilets, to this renovation project. He hired Calcasieu Lumber Company to connect the two log buildings into a three-family house. Then he moved sections of a house on Longview Avenue supposedly given to him by a friend to 4811 Sinclair and connected the sections to the remains of a rock summer kitchen for a fourth rental unit. Newton accidentally moved the wrong house. Instead of moving his friend's house, he moved a rental house owned by Woodrow Knape. Knape sued and Newton lost the property. Calcasieu Lumber Company obtained the property because of mechanics and vendors liens against the property and quickly sold it to Alfred and Lula Cromeans. The Cromeans lived in the remodeled house for eight years and never knew they were living in a log house. They traded houses with Mabel Huggins in 1961. Huggins, a widow with one daughter, rented sections of the houses to members of her family. When her daughter was murdered, she adopted her two grandchildren. As she aged, the property fell into disrepair and by the time of her death in 1985, it was hopelessly decrepit. The city issued a Repair or Demolish order on the property in 1987 and her heirs (who were her grandchildren) put the property up for sale. In 1989, the Huggins' grandchildren sold it to the Collins who restored it.



Harry Newton, Alf and Lula Cromeans with sons, and Mabel Ross Huggins

49TH AND BURNET ROAD – “49th and Burnet Road” by William S. Brewington.

Impatient blinking lights
Homeward bound they are.
Line up for half a block
So near and yet so far.

Unwilling to brook delay
Tempers start to burn.
If only traffic would subside
And permit a left-hand turn.

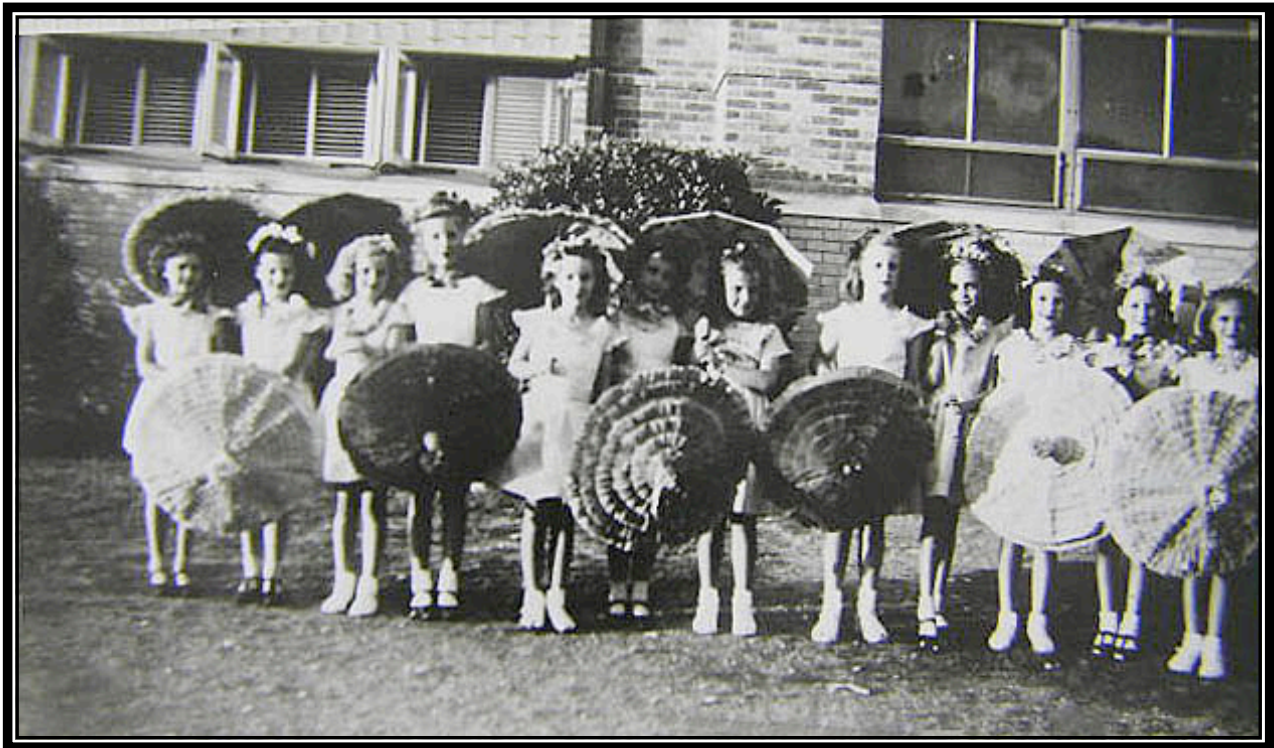
4907 LYNNWOOD – The poem above was written in 1959 by William S. Brewington who lived at 4907 Lynnwood. There was no light at the intersection of 49th and Burnet Road and the Brewingtons would wait in traffic to make a left-hand turn sometimes a quarter of an hour or more. Treva and William bought the house at 4907 in 1953 so their daughter could attend Rosedale, which, they believed, was the best grade school in Austin. The Brewingtons added a bedroom on the back about 1955 and built a playhouse in the backyard. William died in 1962 and Treva sold the home a short while later.

THE ROSEDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION – In 1976, the city proposed to close Fire Station 12 at 2109 Hancock Drive. Milton Morse Jr., a Rosedale resident, spearheaded the petition drive to save the fire station which was successful. Residents went on to write a constitution and bylaws for the new neighborhood association and the first slate of officers was elected in April, 1979: Morse was president, Helen Hill was vice president and others on the board were Mrs. Maurine Morse, Linda McElrath, Judy J. Glass, William E. Hellums, and Lynn E. Thurmond. The original boundaries were Hancock Drive to 38th Street, Lamar Boulevard/Burnet Road to Shoal Creek. In 1981, the association tried to keep the Rosedale

Elementary School open. But in 1984, it closed as an elementary school and now serves the educational needs of severely retarded students. Other issues in the 1980s addressed by the association were: proposed widening of 45th Street, the Hike and Bike Trail, the proposed closing of the North Loop branch library, and the land use plan for the Alta Vista section of the neighborhood which was approved as an advisory document by both the planning commission and the city council. In 1988, the association was instrumental in stalling the demolition of the log structures at 4811 Sinclair until buyers could be found. In the 1990s, the association has been concerned primarily with maintaining the residential character of the neighborhood and with revitalization of Ramsey Park and neighborhood activities like the 4th of July Parade and Carnival, caroling in the park in December, and the Rosedale Ramble historical walking tour and picnic in April.

GROWING UP IN ROSEDALE DURING WORLD WAR II

Marie Payne Moreland (lived at 4418 Ramsey) – “My parents moved into the new home they had built at 4418 Ramsey in 1939. The lot next to us (4416) was vacant for many years and Daddy always had a large garden with so many vegetables that he had to give a lot away. The roads were unpaved and as kids we delighted in playing in the potholes after a good rain. Across 45th was a cornfield which was later replaced by more houses. I grew up during the years of World War II; rationing and shortages of household items were a way of life. At Rosedale School, we saved our nickels and dimes to buy bonds to help the war effort. Miss Faubion was principal, strict and fair. She and the other teachers promoted an annual May Fete, a really big event we looked forward to all year. It was a celebration in dance and song and skits by students. Mothers made their children’s costumes and so many were really beautiful. We had the traditional May Pole decorated with paper flowers and the expected ‘dance around the May Pole,’ girls dressed in all colors of the rainbow. Refreshments were plentiful – homemade cakes,



Rosedale School May Fete, May, 1947

cookies. It was held outside on the school grounds and was like a three-ring circus because there were many activities going on at once. What fun we had!

“Grocery shopping was done at Peterson’s Store at 40th and Alice Avenue. The barber shop next to it on the north end of the building, was run by Mr. Tobin. I remember many a time sitting on a bench out on the porch while mother shopped and I read comic books and listened to the grown people talk about the war. My father, Sam, Jr., worked at Camp Swift during part of World War II and got to know some of the German prisoners, some of whom were from Rommel’s Tank Corp – some were doctors, dentists, professionals who didn’t know if their loved ones were still alive back in Germany.

“Ramsey Park was an important part of our lives – my brother was born in 1943 and later, he too, spent a lot of time swimming, playing softball, etc. Every Friday night during the summer there would be something special – watermelon parties, water polo, games, music, skits, cake walks. A cake walk is held on a large circle with numbered squares fitted around the circle. The circle and squares can be spray painted on the ground or on a large platform. An individual stands in each square as the music begins and players progress forward around the circle until the music stops. The announcer draws a number and if you are standing on that number, you may win a cake. Usually there were two or three cakes given away a night, if I recall correctly. They were homemade by the park parents. At fifth grade, we entered Baker School, a combination elementary-junior high. We’d cross the state hospital grounds to get home.

“There were a lot of young families. We all knew each other. Evenings were spent after supper on the porch or out in the yard – watering, greeting neighbors who were doing the same. A lot of social interaction – we knew who was sick, who was getting a new car, etc. This was before air conditioning and most families didn’t get TVs until the middle 1950s. We would put pallets on the ground and watch the stars or catch lightening bugs.”

Marie Norwood Roberts (lived at 4714 Ramsey) – “One Sunday morning we were fixing to go to church when we heard the news about Pearl Harbor on the radio. I was a senior in high school at that time. Monday at school was very gloomy. Boys were trying to make up their minds whether to volunteer right then or wait until after graduation. Many did volunteer and we started getting reports back that this one or that one had been killed. There wasn’t much to buy and what you could buy was often rationed. Daddy’s folks in Garfield were farmers and could get more gas than we could. Right after I graduated, I got a job as Scarboroughs as a bookkeeper. We were supposed to wear hose. They were so scarce that when a shipment came in, it was usually the sales ladies who bought most of them. They started building Bergstrom in 1942. My mother’s parents and grandparents both lost their farms in Del Valle to Bergstrom. They brought in a troop carrier command and stationed them at Bergstrom and there was nothing for those boys to do. One guy came out to dinner with my cousin Joe and asked me to write to him. I did and he sent postcards from all the places he went and I still have a newspaper from Tel Aviv. But all of a sudden they stopped. I heard the troop carrier got shot down and wondered if he was on it. When you saw a telegram being delivered to a neighbor, you knew it was bad news. My daddy worked at Ft. Sam Houston in San Antonio training truck and jeep maintenance and repair to soldiers. I married in 1944 to a man who couldn’t get in the military because he had polio. But he joined the state guard which replaced the national guard that got called up. The state guard was kept busy keeping order when northern boys stationed here would stir up trouble in east Austin.”

Forrest Troutman (lived at 4112 Medical Parkway) – “The Monday morning after Pearl Harbor, when I was in the third grade, all the students were taken to the music room at Rosedale School and we listened on the radio to President Roosevelt give a speech and declare war. That day, there were paper boys as far north as 49th Street. Usually paper boys stayed much closer to town. Daddy went to work in a shipyard in Houston right after that. Since Mama had so many kids (12), we had a lot of ration stamps and Mama could buy more sugar and meat and groceries than most people. So Mrs. Warren who had a grocery store at 45th and Burnet Road was always glad to see Mama coming.”

Marilyn Houston Ferguson (lived at 4616 Shoalwood) – “I was 16 when my parents moved here in June, 1942. I had just graduated from high school in Round Rock but my folks felt I was too young to go away to college so they moved here so I could live at home and go to college.

Everyone was frantically working because the country was in bad shape. Most of the boys I knew went directly into the service after high school. So in 1943 I left college and went to work for the Southern Pacific Railroad at 3rd and Congress in the ticket office. My dad also worked for the railroad. We worked seven days a week often at night. I usually rode the bus to and from work (it stopped at 46th and Ramsey) but the bus didn't run at night. Since railroads were considered an essential industry, we got extra gas so we could use the car when we had to work nights."

Judy Clark Zaleski (lived at 4418 Rosedale) – "I was in Rosedale school 1st through 4th grades during the war. You could get a full plate lunch for 15 cents or just vegetables or even just milk if you brought your own lunch. The lunchroom was apart from the school and you would get wet if it was raining when you went to lunch. With rationing, even the schools had trouble getting food. Some government agency used to give huge blocks of butter, tins of lard, large sacks of flour and sugar and other food to the schools. The parents would volunteer to go pick it up and bring it to the school. Because my dad had a truck, often my parents would pick it up and I got out early on those days. Toward the end of the war our class took up contributions for the war effort and everybody who did that got a jeep ride in Wooldridge Park. Our whole class got jeep rides. The day President Roosevelt died [April 12, 1945] I remember coming out the front door of the school and finding a large group of parents, including my mother, to meet their children and they were crying, men and women. I'll never forget that."

PHOTO CREDITS: Photo of Rosedale School May Fete courtesy of Marie Payne Moreland, Robert Pickle courtesy of daughter Verna Pickle Warwick, the Ramsey Park Mothers Club baseball team courtesy of Mrs. Charlie (PeeWee) Joyce, Crenshaw Athletic Club and students courtesy of Bee Crenshaw, rifle targets and Adolph Topperwein courtesy of Anne Kerr, John Hancock courtesy of descendant Nell McCutchan, Franz Fiset courtesy of Nell McCutchan, the Wallises courtesy of former neighbor Roberta Pickle Helms, Harry Newton courtesy of the Austin History Center, the Nitschkes courtesy of daughter, Alice Ann Wilder, the Cromeans courtesy of son Rodney Cromeans, Mabel Huggins courtesy of grandchildren, Raymond Boyd, Lillian Smith, and Robert Clark courtesy of daughter Judy Clark Zaleski.

If you notice any mistakes in these notes or can provide information about these or other sites or subjects in the Rosedale neighborhood, please call Karen S. Collins 323-2470. Thank you for your part in collecting and preserving our Rosedale history.

The **2000 Rosedale Ramble** will be dedicated to Rosedale residents, past and present, with a homecoming picnic in the park. Growing Up In Rosedale will feature Roberta Pickle Helms, Forrest Preece, Judy Clark Zaleski, Verna Pickle Warwick, Ed Brown, Vic Elam, Lawrence Durbin, Myrtle Seiders Cuthbertson, Hazel Preece Wansley, Lorraine Costley Funderburk, Gus Dugger, Alice Joyce Moore, Carolyn "Susie" Coker Rinehart, Morris Basey, Richard Peterson, Sheila Jack Maguire Crabill, Dale Martin, Linda "Penny" Glass McAdams and others.