

The Fielder Flash

Arlington Historical Society

January 2024 Newsletter



Our Venues

Fielder Museum | 1616 W. Abram Street

Knapp Heritage Park | 201 W. Front Street

Arlington Heritage Memorial Grounds | 600 W. Arkansas Lane

Contact Us

Email: fielderh@swbell.net

Website: www.arlingtontxhistory.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/FielderHouseMuseum

Phone: 817-460-4001

A note from the editor

Happy New Year! This month's newsletter features a look back at 2023. It was an eventful year for the Arlington Historical Society, and this year will be just as exciting.

Fielder Museum's Black History exhibit is on display; come out and see it! And, coming up later this month, we have two events at Fielder Museum. First, our Texas Author Book Club continues with "No Country for Old Men" by Cormac McCarthy. Second, we have a special book signing event with Danny Armstrong, who recently published a memoir about growing up in Arlington in the 1950s and 1960s. Check out page 3 for more details. Hope to see you there!

Jason S. Sullivan, 01-31-24

Newsletter Editor

JasonSSullivan@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

- **February 15**—Texas Authors Book Club, Fielder Museum, 6:30 PM
- **February 18**—AHS Board Meeting, 2:00 PM, Fielder Museum
- **February 25**—Book signing with Danny Armstrong, Fielder Museum, 2:00 PM
- **March 21**—Texas Authors Book Club, Fielder Museum, 6:30 PM
- **April 18**—Texas Authors Book Club, Fielder Museum, 6:30 PM

Arlington Historical Society news

2023: A Look Back

It was an eventful year for the Arlington Historical Society! Highlights included the Arlington Heritage Memorial Grounds Dedication Ceremony in May, summer events for the fourth edition of O.K. Carter's book "Caddos, Cotton and Cowboys," and the inaugural Diane Cravens Holiday Tour of Homes in December.

Arlington Historical Society | 2023 Recap

- **January** - Workers began pouring sidewalks at Arlington Heritage Memorial Grounds; "Echoes From The Hill" documentary premiered at the Denton Black Film Festival
- **February** - UTA students toured Fielder Museum and Knapp Heritage Park
- **March** - Fielder Museum featured an exhibit about Seven Seas amusement park
- **April** - Knapp Heritage Park hosted an Adult Easter Egg Hunt
- **May** - Dedication Ceremony held at the renovated Arlington Heritage Memorial Grounds
- **June** - AHS published the fourth edition of O.K. Carter's book "Caddos, Cotton and Cowboys"



- **July & August** - Events held for the fourth edition of O.K. Carter's book "Caddos, Cotton and Cowboys"
- **September** - Texas Authors Book Club started up, and a Texas Historical Marker was dedicated for the Arlington Texas & Pacific Depot and Platform, along with the Sister Cities Recommitment Ceremony
- **October** - AHS members enjoyed an exclusive presentation on the Bird's Fort Cultural Center
- **November** - Wanda Marshall presented "Arlington's War Heroes: Celebrating Their Sacrifices & Achievements" to commemorate Veterans Day
- **December** - AHS and the Junior League of Arlington partnered to present the inaugural Diane Cravens Holiday Tour of Homes

Photos (from top to bottom):

- UTA students touring Fielder & Knapp
- Arlington Heritage Memorial Grounds
- O.K. Carter discussing "Caddos"
- Wanda Marshall on Veterans Day

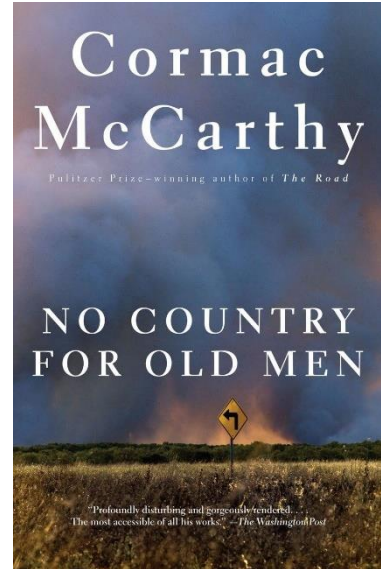
Marker Monday on Facebook

We recently started a new series on the Fielder Museum Facebook page titled "Marker Monday," where we highlight a different Arlington historical marker, plaque, or sign each week. So far, we've highlighted the Texas Historical Markers for Fielder House and the City of Arlington. There's been some healthy discussion and good comments. What's next? Follow us on Facebook to find out!

Texas Author Book Club meets February 15

February's book is the gritty western thriller "No Country for Old Men" by Cormac McCarthy (1933-2023.) Perhaps you've seen the acclaimed 2007 movie starring Tommy Lee Jones, Javier Bardem, and Josh Brolin, which won four Academy Awards, including Best Picture. Much of the movie's dialogue is taken directly from the book, and it may be one of the best book-to-movie adaptations in the last few decades. Whether you've read the book or not, or have only seen the movie, it should be a lively discussion and a great evening. Come out and join us!

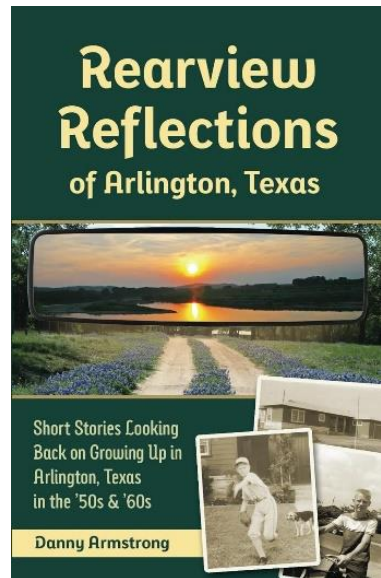
The book club meets at Fielder Museum at 6:30 PM. Contact Fielder Museum or email texasauthorbookclub@gmail.com for more info. Check the Arlington Public Library, [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com), or bookstores for copies; it's also available as an audiobook or E-book as well.



An afternoon with Danny Armstrong

Danny Armstrong attended Arlington High School, Class of 1963. He recently published a memoir titled "Rearview Reflections of Arlington, Texas: Short Stories Looking Back on Growing Up in Arlington, Texas in the '50s & '60s." He also publishes crossword puzzles for car enthusiasts and is known as "The Car Crossword Guy."

Danny will be at Fielder Museum, signing copies of his book and sharing stories about growing up in Arlington during the 1950s and 1960s. Paperback copies will be for sale, and light refreshments will be served. Come out and hear Danny's stories to see if you remember the people and places of Arlington as he does! Seating is limited and filling up fast—please contact Fielder Museum to make reservations if you plan to attend!



Event Details

- **Date & Time: Sunday, February 25th; 2:00 PM**
- **Location: Fielder Museum—1616 W. Abram Street**

Volunteers needed at Knapp Heritage Park

Would you like to volunteer? We're currently looking for folks to volunteer as tour guides at Knapp Heritage Park, which is open from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM on Saturdays and Sundays. Please contact



*Sandra Greenwood
Volunteer Coordinator*

Sandra Greenwood, our new Volunteer Coordinator, at 817-233-8861 for more info or to schedule a time.

Says Sandra—

We need tour guides at Knapp Heritage Park. No experience is necessary, and we have scripts you can use, if needed. Just being there and sharing your enthusiasm is the most important thing. We really want to increase our visitation numbers, and the best way to do that is to welcome our visitors and show them a great time learning about Arlington's rich history. If you could give a couple of hours at our park, we would appreciate it. Our board members are asked to sign up and serve as part of their responsibilities. It's a fun time at the park!

Fielder Museum receives gift from our resident artist

In last month's newsletter, we shared a story about how we have a local artist named Keisha Smith with a studio space inside Fielder Museum. You may remember that she has an annual tradition of designing a Christmas card, and her card this year featured a drawing of the Fielder Museum.

At the Arlington Historical Society's January board meeting, Keisha presented the original drawing to AHS Executive Director Geraldine Mills and AHS President Nancy Tice. The drawing is displayed at Fielder for all to admire. What a beautiful piece of artwork and a wonderful gift to Fielder Museum! Be sure to look for it next time you visit.



*Geraldine, Nancy, and Keisha
with the Fielder House drawing*

QR Codes coming soon to Knapp Heritage Park and Fielder Museum

The AHS is working on enhancing your experience at Knapp and Fielder with QR Codes—which are two-dimensional barcodes that you scan with your smartphone. When you scan one, it typically brings up a website, which we'll use to provide more info about our venues.

QR Codes are gaining in popularity, as they allow additional info to be shared in an easy way. We already have some at the Arlington Heritage Memorial Grounds, and there are also some at Arlington Cemetery (pictured to the right.) We're starting with ones at Knapp and will then add ones to Fielder Museum. They should be up and running soon! And, if you don't know how to use them, we'll show you how.



Local History news

General Motors: 70 Years in Arlington

Earlier this month marked the 70th anniversary of General Motors operating in Arlington. Since the first car rolled off the line at the Arlington plant in January 1954, more than 12 million vehicles have followed. For over 20 years, the plant has focused on assembling large SUVs, with its current lineup including the Chevy Tahoe, Chevy Suburban, GMC Yukon, GMC Yukon XL, Cadillac Escalade, and Cadillac Escalade ESV. They can produce approximately 1,200 SUVs daily, or one nearly every 60 seconds. Of the full-sized SUVs on U.S. roads today, it's estimated that 75% came from Arlington.



When the GM Plant arrived here in the 1950s, it forever changed Arlington, and we would be a much different city without it. In 1950, Arlington's population was less than 8,000 people. It was a small town, and the arrival of the GM Plant led to more jobs, a population surge, and staggering growth. It was one of the first major accomplishments of Mayor Tom Vandergriff, who became Arlington's mayor in 1951. Getting the GM Plant was a pivotal moment in Arlington's history, and without it, it's possible that Six Flags, the Texas Rangers, and other

employment and entertainment options wouldn't be here today. With over 5,000 employees, the GM Plant is one of the largest employers in Arlington and provides a significant boost to the local economy.

Photos show the formal opening in June 1954, when the 10,000th car rolled off the assembly line, and an aerial shot of the plant from the 1960s. Photos are from the Arlington Historical Society's Fielder House Museum collection in partnership with The Portal to Texas History (<https://texashistory.unt.edu>.)