



Collin County Historical Commission

Historical Markers

Collin County has over
170 Texas State Historical Markers

Over 10 sites have been awarded
Collin County Historical Markers

Texas State Historical Markers

The state of Texas has 2 kinds of historical markers – Recorded Texas Historic Landmark markers and Subject markers. An RTHL is given to a building that is historically important. Subject markers are for any event or subject that is historically significant.

Applications are available at the Texas Historical Commission website - <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/markerdesigns/madapply.shtml>. The time period for applying is September 1 – November 15. All applications are done by computer and must go through the Collin County Historical Commission for initial approval.

Cemeteries can apply for Historic Texas Cemetery Designation year-round.

County Historical Markers

The Collin County Historical Commission established the Collin County Historical Marker program to interpret, promote and protect historic and cultural resources located in Collin County that are worthy of preservation. Through the designation process, sites important to the county will be evaluated using established criteria and, if selected, marked for the education and enjoyment of citizens and visitors alike.

Suggested County Markers

Application Forms for County Markers



Collin County Historical Commission

Texas State Historical Markers

By Community

Allen: Allen Cemetery, Allen Station, Allen

Altoga: Altoga Cemetery, Stiff Chapel Cemetery

Anna: Coffman Cemetery, First Christian Church of Anna, Public Education, Sherley Store, James Throckmorton, William Throckmorton, Collin McKinney Homestead

Blue Ridge: Blue Ridge Methodist Church, George W. Smith, Verona Methodist Church

Celina: Alla School, Nelson Hotel, Old Celina Cemetery, Crossroads Cemetery

Dallas: Frankford Church, Frankford Cemetery, Renner Baptist Church

Farmersville: Bain-Honaker House, Farmersville, Audie Murphy Homecoming, First Baptist Church, First Methodist Church, Farmersville Cemetery, First National Bank, Huson Cemetery, Bethlehem Baptist Church and Cemetery, Honaker-Holsonbake House

Frisco: T. J. Campbell House, Frisco Methodist Church, Shawnee Trail, Lebanon

Josephine: Central National Road

Lavon: Millwood Cemetery, Abston Cemetery, Thompson Cemetery

Lucas: Forest Grove Christian Church, Lovejoy School, John Meyers McKinney

McKinney: See McKinney page

Melissa: First Baptist Church, Melissa School, Melissa Cemetery, St. Paul Baptist Church, Highland Cemetery, Stony Point Baptist Church and Cemetery, Melissa Christian Church, Scott-Barker House

Murphy: First Baptist Church, Maxwell Cemetery

Nevada: Nevada Baptist Church, Nevada Cemetery, Prairie Grove Cemetery, Mt. Pleasant Hill Cemetery, McMinn Chapel Cemetery, Empire College, Empire Masonic Lodge, Bear Creek Cemetery

New Hope: Woodlawn Cemetery

Parker: Corinth Presbyterian Church

Plano: First Christian Church, First Baptist Church, First Methodist Church, First Presbyterian Church, Baccus Cemetery, Young Cemetery, Plano Pioneer Cemetery, Plano Mutual Cemetery, Liberty Baptist Church, Muncey Massacre, Plano National Bank, Rowlett Creek Cemetery, Shiloh Baptist Church, Interurban Station, Ammie Wilson House, High School and Gymnasium



Collin County Historical Commission

Texas State Historical Markers

By Community (continued)

Princeton: POW Camp

Prosper: Rock Hill, Prosper, Lee Lodge

Rhea Mills: Scott Cemetery, Walnut Grove
Presbyterian Church, Wilson Creek House

Richardson: Hill-Robberson House, Routh
Cemetery

St. Paul: Charles Stibbens

Westminster: Elm Grove Cemetery

Weston: Cottage Hill Methodist Church
and Cemetery, First Christian Church

Wylie: Brown House, Stone House, First
Baptist Church, Wylie Methodist Church



Collin County Historical Commission

Texas State Historical Markers

McKinney:

Aron-Harris House	Finch Elementary School	Collin McKinney
Barnes – Largent House	First Baptist Church	Collin McKinney Cabin
Beverly-Harris House	First Christian Church	McLarry Cemetery
Bradley Cemetery	First Methodist Church	Muse Academy
Buckner	First National Bank Building	Old Post Office
Buckner Cemetery	First Presbyterian Church	Old Settlers' Cemetery
Burton House	Fox-Caldwell House	Old Settlers' Park
Chambersville Cemetery	Gough-Hughston House	Pecan Grove Cemetery
Chambersville Church	Charles Heard Home	Rhea House
Collin County	John Heard House	St. Mark Baptist Church
Collin County Courthouse	Heard-Craig House	Scott Home
Collin County Farm	Hoard House	Stiff House
Collin County Prison	Howell House	Taylor House
Crouch Perkins House	Rebekah Baines Johnson	Texas American Bank
David House	Kirkpatrick House	William Clinton Thompson House
Dulaney Cottage	Largent House	Throckmorton Law Office
Dulaney House	Martin House	Waddill-Morris Homesite
Elm Saloon	McGarrah Cemetery	Wilmeth-McKinney Homeste
Estes House	McKinney	
Faires House		



Collin County Historical Commission

County Historical Markers

Fitzhugh Mills

Gumbo Pits

Onion Shed

Bill Smith's Café

Pitts Log Cabin

POW/Migrant Camp

Squeezepenny

Wilson Chapel

Fossil Fish

Hedgcoxe War

Iron Bridge CR475

Iron Bridge CR475 Site

Iron Bridge CR476

Iron Bridge CR476 Site

Roseland





Collin County Historical Commission

Gumbo Pits - Josephine

In the years around 1910, the air in Josephine, Texas smelled of sulphur as the Cotton Belt Railroad made “Gumbo Gravel.”

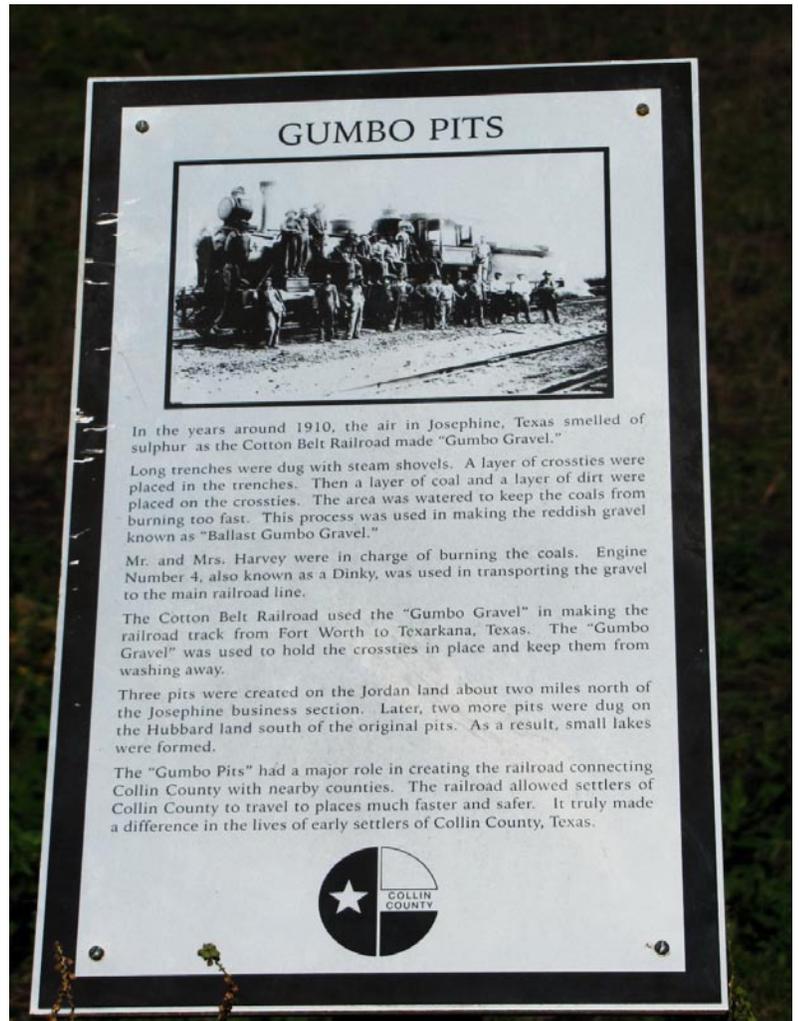
Long trenches were dug with steam shovel. A layer of crossties were placed in the trenches. Then a layer of coal and a layer of dirt were placed on the crossties. The area was watered to keep the coals from burning too fast. This process was used in making the reddish gravel known as “Ballast Gumbo Gravel.”

Mr. and Mrs. Harvey were in charge of burning the coals. Engine Number 4, also known as a Dinky, was used in transporting the gravel to the main railroad line.

The Cotton Belt Railroad used the “Gumbo Gravel” in making the railroad track from Fort Worth to Texarkana, Texas. The “Gumbo Gravel” was used to hold the crossties in place and keep them from washing away.

Three pits were created on the Jordan land about two miles north of the Josephine business section. Later, two more pits were dug on the Hubbard land south of the original pits. As a result, small lakes were formed.

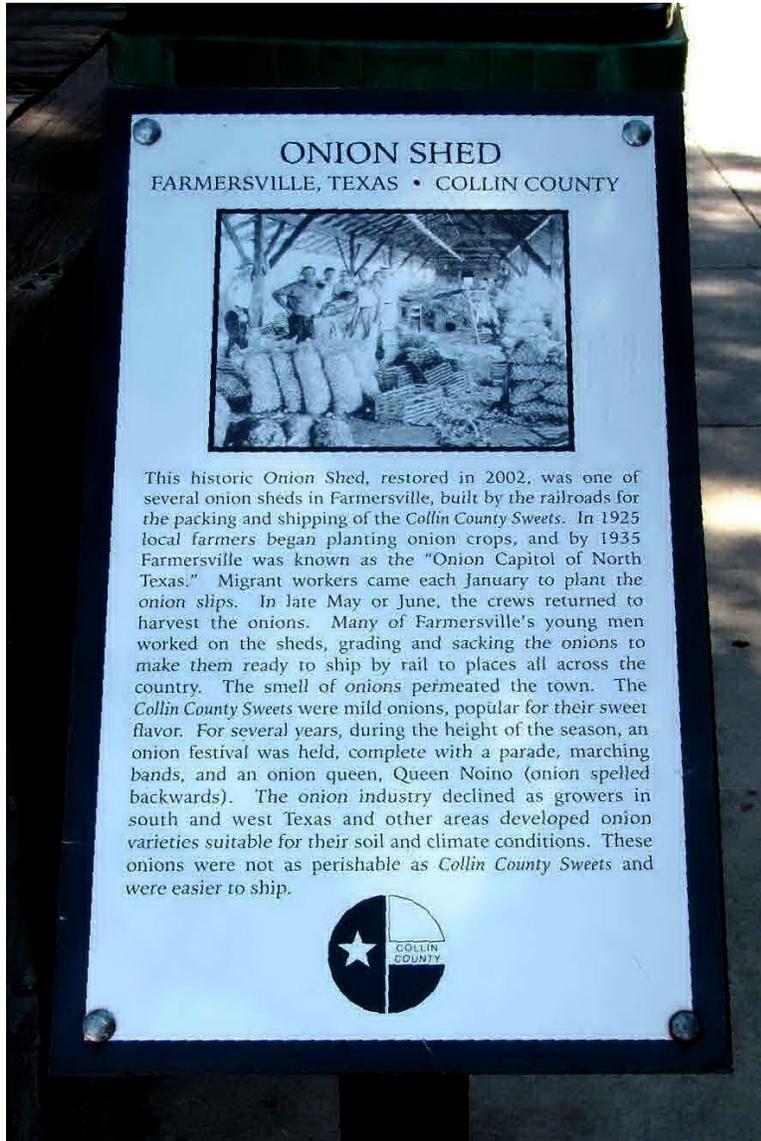
The “Gumbo Pits” has a major role in creating the railroad connecting Collin County with nearby counties. The railroad allowed settlers of Collin County to travel to places much faster and safer. It truly made a difference in the lives of early settlers of Collin County, Texas.





Collin County Historical Commission

Onion Shed - Farmersville



This historic *Onion Shed*, restored in 2002, was one of several onion sheds in Farmersville, built by the railroads for the packing and shipping of the *Collin County Sweets*. In 1925 local farmers began planting onion crops and by 1935 Farmersville was known as the “Onion Capitol of North Texas.” Migrant workers came each January to plant the onion slips. In late May or June, the crews returned to harvest the onion. Many of Farmersville’s young men worked on the shed, grading and sacking the onions to make them ready to ship by rail to places all across the country. The smell of onions permeated the town. The *Collin County Sweets* were mild onions, popular for their sweet flavor. For several years, during the height of the season, an onion festival was held, complete with a parade, marching bands, and an onion queen, Queen Noino (onion spelled backwards). The onion industry declined as growers in south and west Texas and other areas developed onion varieties suitable for their soil and climate conditions. These onions were not as perishable as *Collin County Sweets* and were easier to ship.

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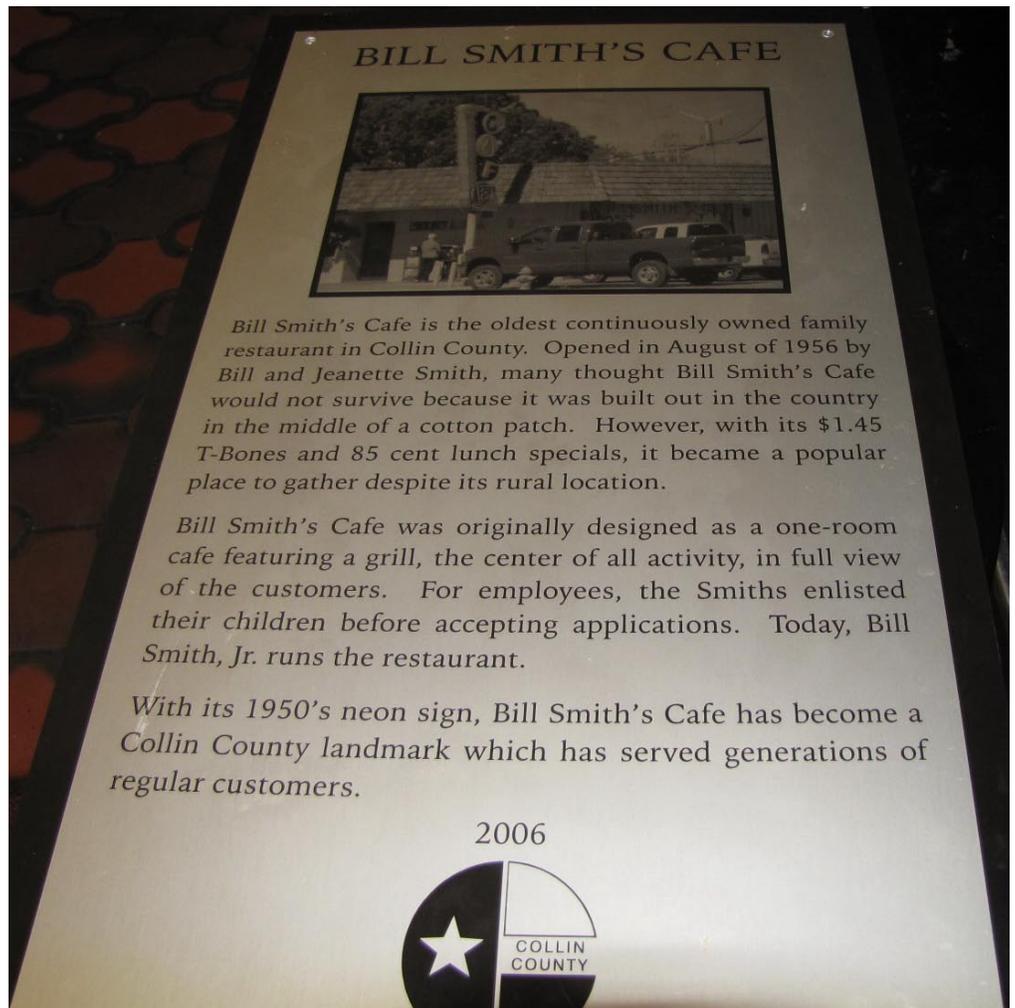
Collin County Historical Commission

Bill Smith's Café - McKinney

Bill Smith's Café is the oldest continuously owned family restaurant in Collin County. Opened in August of 1956 by Bill and Jeanette Smith, many thought Bill Smith's Café would not survive because it was built out in the country in the middle of a cotton patch. However, with its \$1.45 T-Bones and 85 cent lunch specials, it became a popular place to gather despite its rural location.

Bill Smith's Café was originally designed as a one-room café featuring a grill, the center of all activity, in full view of the customers. For employees, the Smiths enlisted their children before accepting applications. Today, Bill Smith, Jr. runs the restaurant.

With its 1950's neon sign, Bill Smith's Café has become a Collin County landmark which has served generations of regular customers.





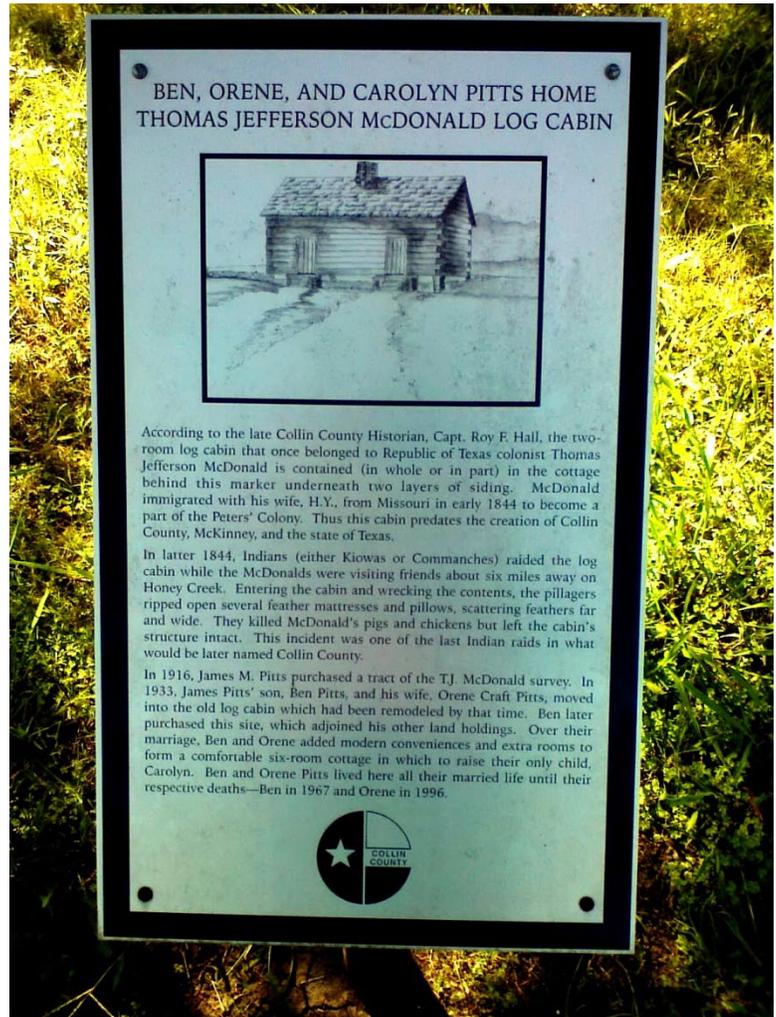
Collin County Historical Commission

Pitts Home/McDonald Cabin - McKinney

According to the late Collin County Historian, Capt. Roy F. Hall, the two-room log cabin that once belonged to Republic of Texas colonist Thomas Jefferson McDonald is contained (in whole or in part) in the cottage behind this marker underneath two layers of siding, McDonald immigrated with his wife, H.Y., from Missouri in early 1844 to become a part of the Peters Colony. Thus this cabin predates the creation of Collin County, McKinney, and the state of Texas.

In latter 1844, Indians (either Kiowas or Commanches) raided the log cabin while the McDonalds were visiting friends about six miles away on Honey Creek. Entering the cabin and wrecking the contents, the pillagers ripped open several feather mattresses and pillows, scattering feathers far and wide. They killed McDonald's pigs and chickens but left the cabin's structure intact. This incident was one of the last Indian raids in what would be later named Collin County.

In 1916, James M. Pitts purchased a tract of the T.J. McDonald survey. In 1933, James Pitts' son, Ben Pitts, and his wife, Orene Craft Pitts, moved into the old log cabin which had been remodeled by that time. Ben later purchased this site, which adjoined his other land holdings. Over their marriage, Ben and Olene added modern conveniences and extra rooms to form a comfortable six room cottage in which to raise their only child, Carolyn. Ben and Orene Pitts lived here all their married life until their respective deaths—Ben in 1967 and Orene in 1996.

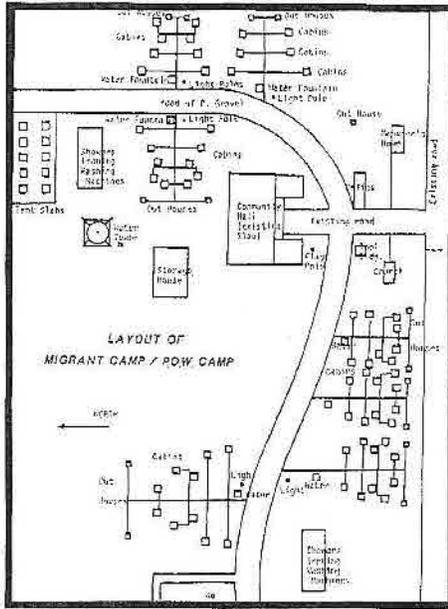




Collin County Historical Commission

POW Camp - Princeton

POW CAMP — PRINCETON



The migrant workers camp was converted to a POW camp late in WWII—February 1945. The Princeton camp housed POWs for less than a year. The farmers would come to the camp in trucks and take the prisoners to their fields just as they had the migrant workers. Under the Geneva Convention, the farmers were to pay the prisoners two dollars a day for their work. The farmers did not have enough labor or farm since all the boys were away at war. Not only did the prisoners work in the fields, but they also did a stonemasonry work in downtown Princeton. Others helped construct a park in Princeton built in memory of the men who served in the armed forces during WWII and a shrine to perpetuate the memory of those who lost their lives in the war. The war was over in August of 1945, but the prisoners were not released until the following January.



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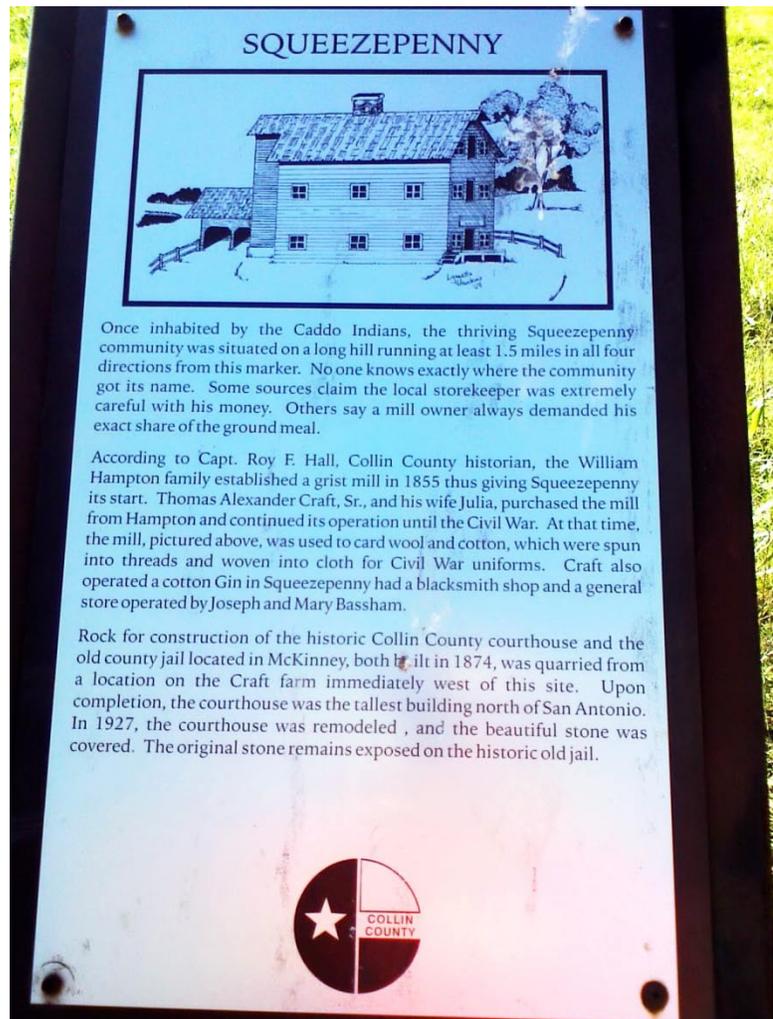
Collin County Historical Commission

Squeezepenny - Melissa

Once inhabited by the Caddo Indians, the thriving Squeezepenny community was situated on a long hill running at least 1.5 miles in all four directions from this marker. No one knows exactly where the community got its name. Some sources claim the local storekeeper was extremely careful with his money. Others say a mill owner always demanded his exact share of the ground meal.

According to Capt. Roy F. Hall, Collin County historian, the William Hampton family established a grist mill in 1855 thus giving Squeezepenny its start. Thomas Alexander Craft, Sr., and his wife Julia, purchased the mill from Hampton and continued its operation until the Civil War. At that time, the mill, pictured above, was used to card wool and cotton, which were spun into threads and woven into cloth for Civil War uniforms. Craft also operated a cotton Gin in Squeezepenny had a blacksmith shop and a general store operated by Joseph and Mary Bassham.

Rock for construction of the historic Collin County courthouse and the old county jail located in McKinney, both built in 1874, was quarried from a location on the Craft farm immediately west of this site. Upon completion, the courthouse was the tallest building north of San Antonio. In 1927, the courthouse was remodeled, and the beautiful stone was covered. The original stone remains exposed on the historic old jail.





Collin County Historical Commission

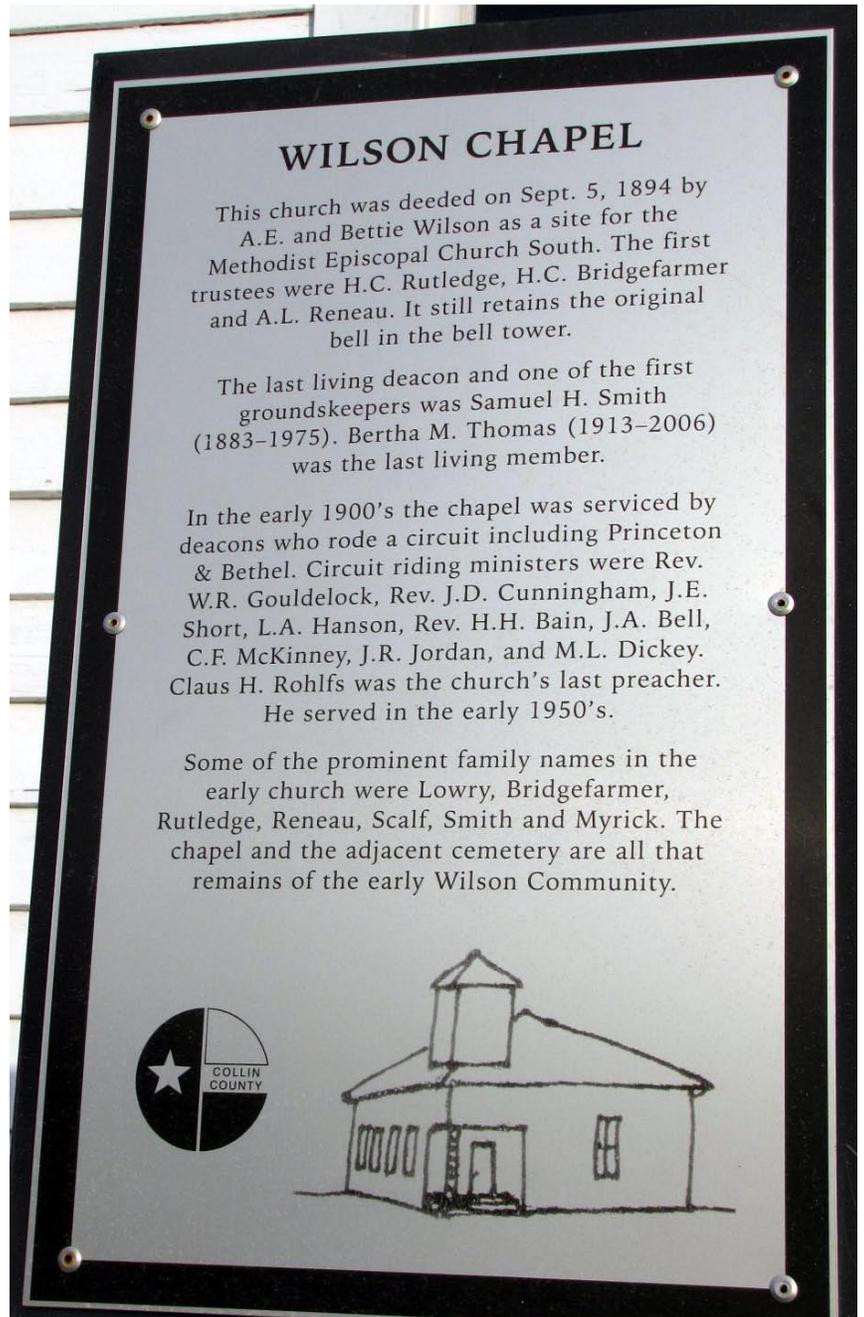
Wilson Chapel - Lowry Crossing

This church was deeded on Sept. 5, 1894 by A. E. and Bettie Wilson as a site for the Methodist Episcopal Church South. The first trustees were H. C. Rutledge, H. C. Bridgefarmer and A. L. Reneau. It still retains the original bell in the bell tower.

The last living deacon and one of the first groundskeepers was Samuel H. Smith (1883-1975). Bertha M. Thomas (1913-2006) was the last living member.

In the early 1900's the chapel was serviced by deacons who rode a circuit including Princeton & Bethel. Circuit riding ministers were Rev. W. R. Gouldlock, Rev. J. D. Cunningham, J. E. Short, L. A. Hanson, Rev. H. H. Bain, J. A. Bell, C. F. McKinney, J. R. Jordan, and M. L. Dickey. Claus H. Rohlfs was the church's last preacher. He served in the early 1950's.

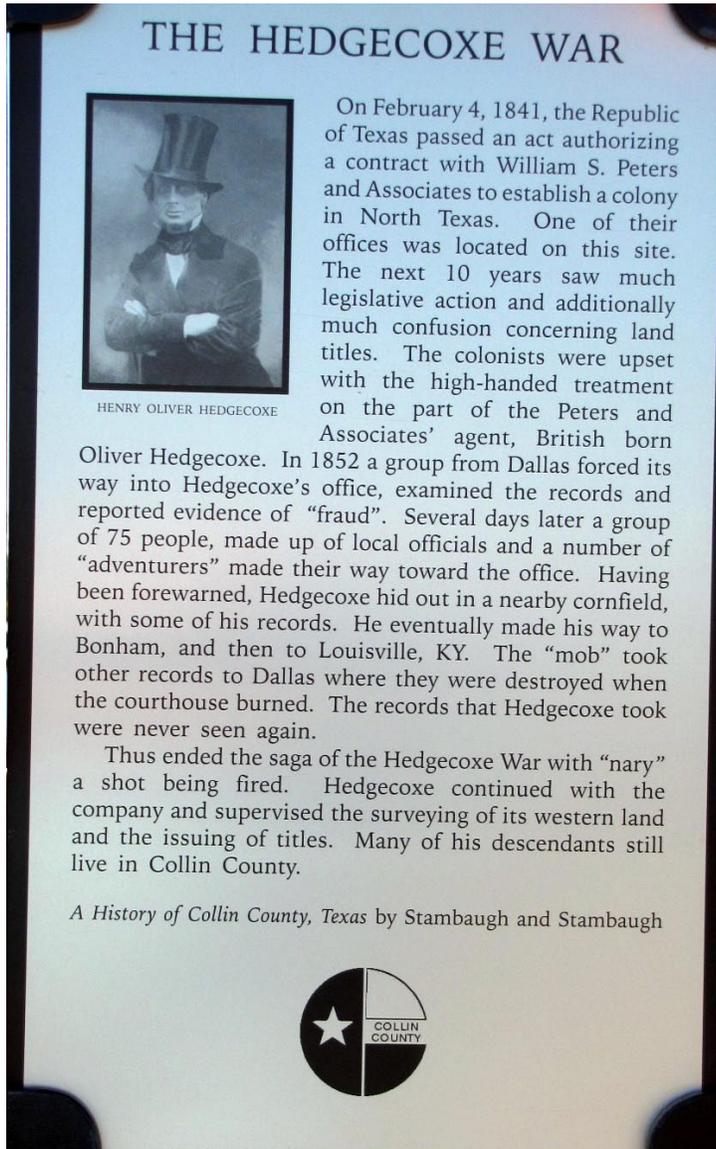
Some of the prominent family names in the early church were Lowry, Bridgefarmer, Rutledge, Reneau, Scalf, Smith, and Myrick. The chapel and the adjacent cemetery are all that remains of the early Wilson Community.





Collin County Historical Commission

Hedgecoxe War - McKinney



On February 4, 1841, the Republic of Texas passed an act authorizing a contract with William S. Peters and Associates to establish a colony in North Texas. One of their offices was located on this site. The next 10 years saw much legislative action and additionally much confusion concerning land titles. The colonists were upset with the high-handed treatment on the part of the Peters and Associates' agent, British born Oliver Hedgecoxe. In 1852 a group from Dallas forced its way into Hedgecoxe's office, examined the records and reported evidence of "fraud". Several days later a group of 75 people, made up of local officials and a number of "adventurers" made their way toward the office. Having been forewarned, Hedgecoxe hid out in a nearby cornfield, with some of his records. He eventually made his way to Bonham, and then to Louisville, KY. The "mob" took other records to Dallas where they were destroyed when the courthouse burned. The records that Hedgecoxe took were never seen again.

Thus ended the saga of the Hedgecoxe War with "nary" a shot being fired. Hedgecoxe continued with the company and supervised the surveying of its western land and the issuing of titles. Many of his descendants still live in Collin County.

A History of Collin County, Texas by Stambaugh and Stambaugh

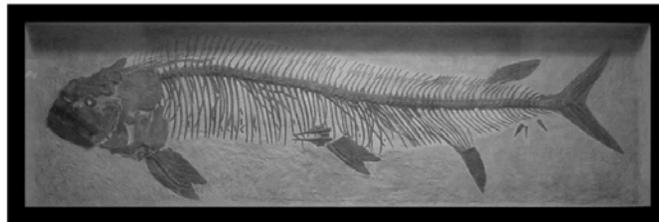


Collin County Historical Commission

Fossil Fish - Celina

GIANT FOSSIL FISH

CELINA, TEXAS • COLLIN COUNTY



In 1930 a giant fossil fish was discovered near here on Haw Branch by Homer Lafayette Merritt of Celina, Texas. With the help of a trained technician, this fish was carefully excavated and is now on display in the basement of the Texas Memorial Museum, University of Texas, Austin, Texas.

This giant fossil fish from the Cretaceous Period of Texas, measures 12 feet, 10 inches in length. 65,000,000 years ago, when this fish was living, large areas of Texas were covered by warm seas containing a great many kinds of strange plants, fish, clams, and reptiles. Initially covered by soft, limy deposits at the bottom of the sea, through time agents of erosion exposed many of these fossils. This particular fish is a relative of present day tarpon, salmon, herring, and trout.*

*Taken from [A History of Collin County, Texas](#) by J. Lee Stambaugh and Lillian J. Stambaugh



2010

Collin County Historical Commission



Collin County Historical Commission

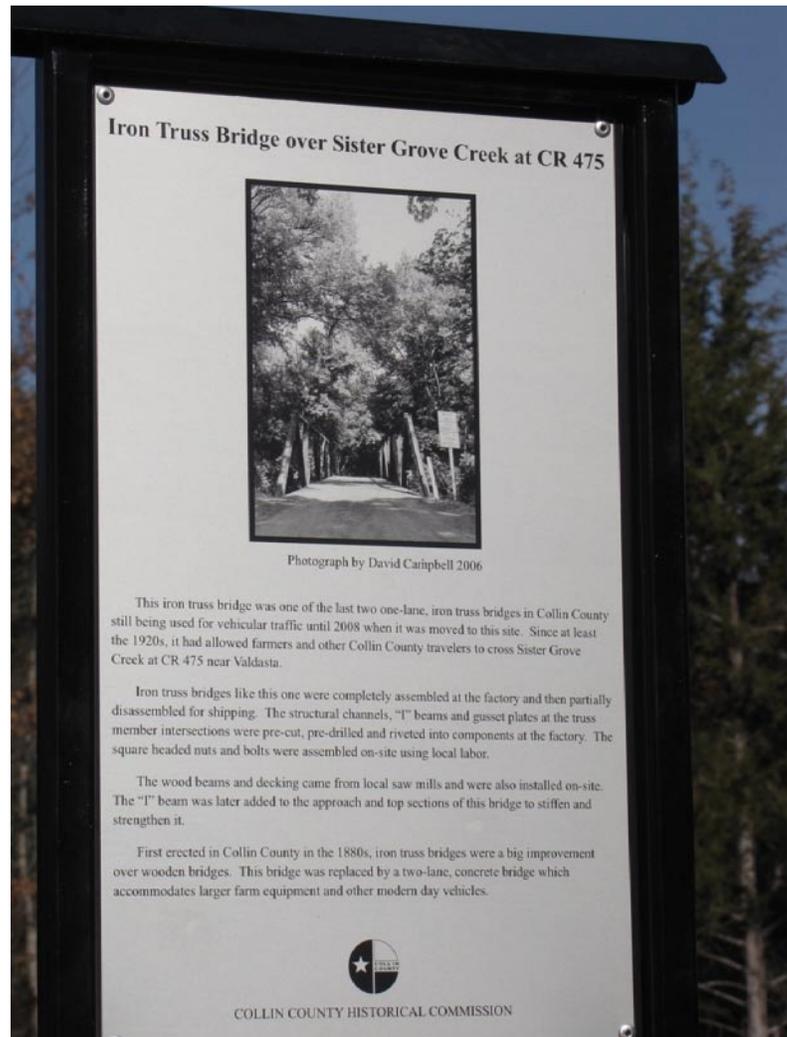
Iron Bridge CR475 - Westminster

This iron truss bridge was one of the last two one-lane, iron truss bridges in Collin County still being used for vehicular traffic until 2008 when it was moved to this site. Since at least the 1920s, it had allowed farmers and other Collin County travelers to cross Sister Grove Creek at CR 475 near Valdasta.

Iron truss bridges like this one were completely assembled at the factory and then partially disassembled for shipping. The structural channels, “I” beams and gusset plates at the truss member intersections were pre-cut, pre-drilled and riveted into components at the factory. The square headed nuts and bolts were assembled on-site using local labor.

The wood beams and decking came from local saw mills and were also installed on-site. The “I” beam was later added to the approach and top sections of this bridge to stiffen and strengthen it.

First erected in Collin County in the 1880s, iron truss bridges were a big improvement over wooden bridges. This bridge was replaced by a two-lane, concrete bridge which accommodates larger farm equipment and other modern day vehicles. (2011)





Collin County Historical Commission

Iron Bridge CR 475 Site - Westminster

This iron truss bridge has been transporting farmers and the people of Collin County across Sister Grove Creek on CR 475 since at least the 1920s. It was among the last of the single-lane, iron truss bridges in the county used for vehicular travel. Iron truss bridges were first erected in Collin County in the 1880s.

Iron truss bridges like this one were completely assembled at the factory and then partially disassembled for shipping. They were re-assembled on site.

The structural channels, “I” beams and gusset plates at the truss member intersections were pre-cut, pre-drilled and riveted into components at the factory. The square headed nuts and bolts were assembled on-site using local labor. The wood beams and decking came from local saw mills and were also installed on-site. An “I” beam was later added

to the approach and top sections of this bridge to stiffen and strengthen it. The weight limits of this bridge were 16,000 pounds gross or 10,000 pounds per axle.

Iron truss bridges were a big improvement over wooden bridges. They vastly improved the flow of transportation in the county. (2011)





Collin County Historical Commission

Iron Bridge CR476 – McKinney



This one-lane, iron truss bridge, which spanned Sister Grove Creek on CR 476 near Westminster, was one of the last bridges of its kind in Collin County used for vehicular traffic. It was built in 1929.

Originally wooden bridges spanned the creeks in Collin County transporting pedestrians, horses and wagons and early farm equipment. The remains of the original wooden bridge at this site is on the bank under the iron bridge. The wooden bridges required constant repair and replacement after floods.

With the mechanization of farming in the county at the beginning of the 20th century and the use of heavier tractors and farm implements, the wooden bridges were replaced with stronger iron bridges. The weight limits on this bridge were 12,000 pounds gross or 7500 pounds per axle.

Iron truss bridges were assembled at the factory and then partially disassembled for shipping. They were re-assembled on site using local labor. The wooden decking and other parts of the bridge were made locally. Originally the bridge had wooden hand railings for pedestrians.

Iron truss bridges were erected in Collin County as early as the 1880s. They served the county for over 100 years into the 21st century. (2010)



Collin County Historical Commission

Iron Bridge CR476 Site - Westminster



This marks the site of one of the last two iron truss bridges in Collin County still being used for vehicular traffic until 2008. It was moved to span the creek between the Collin County Courthouse and the Jack Hatchell Administration Building on Bloomdale Road in McKinney. This bridge is currently a foot bridge for pedestrians between these two public buildings.

Originally wooden bridges spanned the creeks in Collin County transporting horses and wagons and early farm equipment. The wooden bridges required constant repair and even replacement after floods. With the mechanization of farming in the county at the beginning of the 20th century and the use of heavy steam and petroleum traction engines and tractors, stronger bridges were needed.

Iron truss bridges were assembled at the factory and then partially disassembled for shipping. They were re-assembled on site using local labor. The wooden decking and other parts of the bridge were made locally.

Iron truss bridges were first erected in Collin County in the 1880s. The iron truss bridge is known to have been in use here over Sister Grove Creek at CR 476 long before World War II. It was replaced by this two-lane concrete bridge in 2008. (2011)



Collin County Historical Commission

County Historical Markers

Recommendations

The goal of the county marker committee is to preserve the history of Collin County by recognizing county historical sites and awarding county historical markers **to those sites that might not qualify for state historic recognition but are important to the history of the county.** Only **five** will be selected this year.

Send recommendations to: Collin County Historical Commission, Attn: County Marker Chairman, 2300 Bloomdale Road, McKinney, TX 75071

Marker	Location
Chambersville Schools	Chambersville
Travis Farm	Murphy
Shady Grove Full Gospel Church	Richardson
Daniel Implement	Murphy
Murphy Grocery	Murphy
205 S. Benge Street	McKinney
Murphy Community	Murphy
J. L. Murphy Grave	Murphy
Lair Cemetery	Anna
Orenduff Cemetery	S. of Melissa
Melissa Community	Melissa
Interurban Station	Melissa
Wysong Blacksmith Shop	Melissa
Highland Cemetery	Melissa
Miller Farm	Melissa
Parris Farm	Melissa
Luscombe Farm	
Graves Farm	
C.R. Osburn House	
Parris water well	



Collin County Historical Commission

County Historical Markers

Recommendations for County Markers

Listed previously:

Haunted Crossing

Indian Creek

Haggard Farm

Plano

Wells Farm

Plano

Gus Wilson's Grave Site

Woodlawn Road

Old Collin County Prison

Frognot

Old Dallas Road

Rambo Park

Ardath Community

NE McKinney

Mantua

Anna

Rhea Mills

Millwood

Buckner

Wetsel Stage Coach stop

Wilmeth School

Craus Bottling Works

Kelly School

Anna

First Poor Farm in Collin County

Rockhill

W McKinney

Trolley Lake

Toll Bridge between McKinney & Farmersville



Collin County Historical Commission

County Historical Markers

Application

The Collin County Historical Commission established the Collin County Historical Marker program to interpret, promote and protect historic and cultural resources located in Collin County that are worthy of preservation. Through the designation process, sites important to the county will be evaluated using established criteria and, if selected, marked for the education and enjoyment of citizens and visitors alike.

Please understand that recognition in the Collin County Historical Marker program does not qualify the site for the state or national historical registry, nor does it necessarily qualify the property for tax benefits.

COLLIN COUNTY HISTORICAL MARKER HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The Collin County Historical Commission shall consider, in addition to input from affected property owners, one or more of the following criteria when deciding where a county historical marker shall be placed:

- Site is associated with events or locations that have made a significant contribution **at least 50 years ago** to the cultural, economic, social, archeological, architectural or historical heritage of Collin County.
- Site is associated with persons or groups whose lives were significant in our past.
- Site embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses exceptional artistic value.

PROCEDURE

1. A **completed Collin County** Historical Marker Application form must be submitted to the CCHC County Marker Committee. The application should be as complete as possible. It should include historical information with full citations to sources, should relate the site's eligibility to the criteria listed above, and should provide the most significant facts about the site in a brief list. **It should include copies of historic photos, when available, and current photos.**
2. **The County Marker committee** will assess the information, the integrity of the site, the general suitability of the location for a marker, **and make recommendation to the CCHC.**
3. The County Marker Committee will notify the applicant of acceptance or rejection.

4. If accepted, applicants will be asked to help choose the marker's location and wording for the marker.
5. Upon receipt of the marker fee (approximately \$300.00) a Purchase Order will be requested from the treasurer of the CCHC.
6. The CCHC will vote to approve placement of a marker and notify the applicant.
7. The CCHC will arrange for the installation of the marker.
8. The marker will remain the property of the CCHC.

Mail completed form to: Collin County Historical Commission
 Attn: County Marker Chairman
 2300 Bloomdale Road
 McKinney, TX 75071

COLLIN COUNTY HISTORICAL MARKER APPLICATION

Address/location of site being nominated: _____

Applicant's Name: _____

Address, City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Property owner's permission signature _____ Yes ___ No ___ Date ___

Property owner (if different from applicant): _____

Property owner's telephone: _____ email _____

LANDMARK IDENTIFICATION

Historic Name of Site _____

Type of Site: ___Event ___Commercial ___Farm ___Person ___Residence ___Other

Basis for Nomination: (see SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Use additional sheets as needed.

Please share information about the site including citations and references for unique historical facts.

Please share information on what you have heard from neighbors, family, or former property owners about this property.

Has this landmark ever been published, or mentioned in books, magazines, newspapers, etc? If so, please explain and include a copy of the photo or article, if possible.

I understand the cost of the marker is approximately \$300.00 and is payable to CCHC before the marker is ordered.

Payer _____ Date _____ Person

responsible for dedication Ceremony _____

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date submitted _____