

Bronco Tire Shop
502 W. Clayton St.



Colbert Elementary
231 S. Colbert St.



Featured Dayton Texas Stars

FREE ADMISSION!

OLD SCHOOL MUSEUM & LOG CABIN

111 West Houston Street - Dayton

Open Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm

The Old School Museum & Log Cabin are located at 111 West Houston St. across from post office

Dayton Historical Society members serve as hosts for visitors.

For more history/information, visit:

- Website: daytontxhistory.com
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DaytonTxHistory>



Dayton Historical Society Meetings

6 P.M. on last Monday of month

at Parker Hall (behind Old School Museum)

Guest speaker program is preceded by a short business meeting and followed by refreshments.

Public is welcome!

To Rent Parker Hall

call Aline 713-927-1629 or Josh 832-233-3894

Website & Newsletter Contact/Author

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Dayton History News

City of Dayton – Origins



First City Hall of Dayton – Built in 1937

The settlement of the town of Dayton originated in the early 1800s when Mexico authorized its colonization.

The official date of establishment of the city of Liberty (and its sister city of West Liberty aka Dayton located on the other side of the Trinity River) was May 5, 1831 which coincided with the arrival of Mexico's official Jose Francisco Madero and his issuance of land grants.

There are only a few cities in Texas that can lay claim to being the oldest towns in the state – two of which are the sister cities of Liberty and Dayton.

It was 1885 when the town's name transitioned from West Liberty to Dayton. This coincided with completion of an east-west railroad track.

Railway labor had been provided by landowner Isaiah Cates Day who came to West Liberty in 1830 at the age of 18.

His contributions and involvement resulted in the railroad conductors

referring to the train stop's name as "Days Town", "Days Station" and "Dayton Station".

It was July 20, 1907 when an election incorporated Dayton's Independent School District. An election in 1911 incorporated the town of Dayton.

It was the discovery of oil in the 1920s that brought a surge of growth via new businesses, jobs and homes.

An historic icon of those early days is found on Cook St. at Dayton's first city hall building. (See photo above)

It was in use for 67 years from September 1937 through August 2004 for city government, public library, volunteer fire department and police department with various services combinations at different times. It is currently in use by a few city staff.

Prior to 1937, the city had to rent rooms above the Dayton Mercantile Company on Main St. for office space.

1st & Only Police Officer Death

Located just outside of Dayton’s historic city hall building on Cook St. is a historic marker in honor of Louis “Frenchy” Cashat Sr. – Dayton’s only officer killed in the line of duty.

On Thursday, June 15, 1950, while investigating a disturbance near the Holbrook-Taylor Garage at about 4:35 AM, he encountered four juveniles – two boys and two girls – who had stolen a vehicle in Houston and were driving towards Dayton when the vehicle ran out of gas.

A rancher had picked the two boys up and offered to drive them into Dayton to get gas for the car.

As they arrived in Dayton, the two boys attacked the rancher, took his revolver and stabbed him several times.

Night watchman, Officer Cashat, went to investigate the disturbance but was instantly killed by one of the boys – who fled on foot but was apprehended. He was prosecuted for murder and sentenced to two 99-year prison terms.

Officer Louis Cashat was buried at Linney Cemetery in Dayton.



Dayton Police Force Officer Louis Cashat Sr. (1889-1950)

1st Fire Department of Dayton

The first Dayton volunteer fire department was established in 1930 after numerous Depot Street structures along the railroad track downtown burned to the ground in 1929.

The first fire station was a lean-to building/shed located on Bryan St. -- which was named after Oliver Bryan Sterling Sr. (1866-1946) – one of the founders along with his brothers of Humble Oil Company (aka ExxonMobil).

The first pumper truck was built by Dayton’s volunteer firemen in the late 1930s.

The first pump apparatus was a 1940 Ford Pumper custom built in Detroit, Michigan that required driving to/from Detroit on rut filled roads to retrieve it.

In spite of having to support an estimated 20,000 people within an area of 144 square miles, Dayton’s volunteer fire department has remained 100% volunteers who sponsor quarterly fundraisers and rely upon charitable donations.

In spite of being volunteer based, Dayton’s fire department is ranked in the top 10 for its size in the state.



Department emblem displayed on current fire station building exterior

1st Public Library

The vision for establishing a public library in Dayton originated in the 1960s within a local women’s club called Lambda Alpha Sigma.

That vision manifested in 1961 when the American Rice Growers donated a building for that purpose.

The structure was moved to what is now Parker Park on N. Winfree St. and renovated by the Lambda Alpha Sigma members along with their spouses.

In the meantime, a two-story elementary school on the corner of East Houston St. and South Main St. was made available for use as a combination civic center and public library. The library portion opened on June 14, 1962.

As popularity grew, a full-time librarian named Rose Klmitchek was hired in the early 1970s. She remained Dayton’s public librarian for 37 years.

The old Fire Station at Dayton’s first City Hall (photo below) became the location of the library as of 1976.

It was 1985 when Jones Public Library building was completed thanks to a large donation by Edmund E. Jones.

In 2010, the library moved to its current location within Dayton’s Community Center on S. Cleveland St.



Mayor Walter Neel

Walter Salathiel Neel (1868-1962) was elected Dayton’s mayor on November 28, 1925. Although there was probably at least one mayor prior to him, very little is known about him/them.

Walter established his name and reputation on the first day of his January 1, 1912 arrival in Dayton when he immediately purchased Dayton’s 1st newspaper, The Daytonite, for \$1,000 from its owner Marion Price (M.P.) Daniel (father of Texas Governor Price Daniel).

Neel was a servant of the City of Dayton in the roles of Justice of the Peace, City Alderman and City Secretary in addition to being elected Dayton’s Mayor.

He is credited with establishing Dayton’s first volunteer fire department and the acquisition of a fire truck and waterworks.

He was also involved in the Dayton Rotary club and Dayton’s Masonic Lodge.

The Dayton home on North Main St. that Walter had built in 1917 still exists. A Texas State Historical Marker was erected at his home in November 2014.

Walter and his wife Selma were married in 1892, resided in Dayton from the time of their arrival in 1912, and are both buried at Linney Cemetery in Dayton.

Historical Marker for home of Dayton Mayor Walter Neel

1204 N. Main Dayton, TX

