

A Chronological History of Education in Harlingen

Compiled by Norman Rozeff, Harlingen Historical Preservation Society, 7/07

1903 The children of La Providencia Ranch hands are taught by Miss Margarita Villareal (later she becomes Mrs. G.M. Lozano. Their son G.M. Lozano, Jr. will marry another early arrival to the Harlingen scene. This is Ida Priestly, who arrived here in 1922, as her father with ancestors from Clarksville, TX takes up tenant farming in the Rangerville area. In 2002 she is to celebrate her 86th birthday.) Having been graduated after eleven years of schooling in Brownsville Margarita is qualified to teach. Instruction is in English. Later the school moves into the second floor of the Pioneer Building. This serves some of the Hispanic children until the school district builds a facility.

9/05 Lon C. Hill, the founder of Harlingen, builds a small frame schoolhouse near his new home. It opens with the seven Hill children as pupils; three children (Frank, John and Elizabeth) of Hill's sister and brother-in-law -Mr. and Mrs. J.C. McBee; the children (Lynn and Etta) of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas L. Jones, who had accompanied Hill from Beeville; Henry Bell; and later Katherine Weller, daughter A.H. Weller. This is 14 students in all to be taught by W.A. Francis (1905-07). He will someday head the English Department at Texas A&I College in Kingville. He is to be followed by Miss Johnnie Phipps in the 1907-08 school year and Lillian Weems, later Baldrige, in 1908-09. According to Mrs. Baldrige her students were: Kathryn Weller (Mrs. H. D. Seago), Mary Jones (Mrs. H. E. Bennett), Lynn Jones, Henry Bell, Ida Hill (Mrs. H. K. Morrow), Lon (Mose) C. Hill, Jr., John and Frank McBee, Gordon Hill, John Hill, Annie Rooney Hill, Hickman Hill, Sunshine Hill (Mrs. M.L. Caul), and Elizabeth McBee (Mrs. W.L. Darnell).

1907-09 Miss Jesusa Garcia, later Mrs. Cirilo Rodriguez, teaches 12 to 15 Hispanic students in a small house outfitted to be a school room. It is on the property her father, Pancho Garcia, has bought from Hill in the 300 block of West Harrison. Mrs. Rodriguez is to die at age 94 on 11/1/84 leaving four surviving daughters.

10/5/09 The Harlingen Independent School District Board of Trustees holds its organizational meeting in the office of the Morrow Brothers Lumber Company. The board consists of John E. Snavely (chairman), C.F. Perry, H.N. Morrow, J.A. Card, R.S. Chambers, W.E. Hollingsworth, and W.H. Kilgore. The first school site purchased was the Alamo School site, just west of the railroad tracks. Lon C. Hill donated half the site and the District purchased the other half, according to Warren W. Ballard, later business manager of the schools. Miss Anna Dixon, later Mrs. Clark of Austin, teaches at the school for Hispanics.

1908-09 The number of school children is still small enough to list. They are: Allie Hathaway (Mrs. Harold Looney), Auro Hathaway (later Buster), Rhubena Hathaway (Mrs. Dallas Ingle), Peter Hathaway, J.D. Dorrough, Bunny Dorrough, Moody Dorrough (Mrs. Flagg), LeRoy Hoffman, Roland Ogan, Lois Ogan, Grady Ferguson, Lucie Mary Weems, Vivian Barbee, Archie Barbee, Lucille Barbee, Luella Barbee, Quinton Barbee, Emmett Anglin, Wyatt Clark, Earl Waterwall, Laura Lockhart, Basil Watwood, and Jesus ?.

1909 Mrs. George Pletcher, mother of George Pletcher, Jr., who would enter the nursery business and become mayor of Harlingen, along with Mrs. Wiles' sister Eula were school teachers in the Adventist Church building. Her brother H.C. Ware and his wife owned a home next door to the old Adventist Church building, which was later to become a community building.

One student, I.E. (Renus) Snavely, of this period recalls that before the first brick schoolhouse was built classes were held in a succession of places. These were the Adventist Church building, which the Adventists never got to utilize, the Baptist Tabernacle, a red brick building on Harrison Street, and two buildings on the downtown blocks of Jackson. One of these was upstairs over a saloon with a pool hall next door.

5/14/10 The School Board of Trustees considers a bond election. On 7/8/10 the issue is set for \$40,000, payable in 40 years at 4% interest in order to construct, equip, and purchase the sites for two brick schools. Forty-six voters (51 in another account) out of the population of 1,126 participate on 11/9/10. All vote in favor. L.S. Green of Green and Briscoe, Architects, Houston is selected for the "Main School" to serve grades 1 through 11. A.W. Cunningham is instrumental in purchasing a whole city block between 5th and 6th Street along Main Street for the

site of the school. It is purchased from Lon C. Hill for \$3,500. The Anglo students are attending school in the former Seventh Day Adventist building while the Hispanic students are in the brick one-story two-classroom school on what will be South E Street.

4/15/11 Contract for \$5,649 let to R. H. Tadlock to construct the second story addition to the existing two classroom brick schoolhouse for Mexican ethnics. To some this school was called the Benito Juarez School after the president of Mexico. Juarez was called the Lincoln of Mexico for expulsion of the French and his many reforms during his service as president 1861-1872. The School Board Trustees accept this addition on 3/12/12. At this time J.S. Ford is president of the Board and Prof. William L. Sturgeon is school superintendent and secretary to the board. He is also a staunch First Christian Church member. Later when the board is reorganized, John E. Snavelly will handle security. Lucie Weems is principal of the school from 1915 to 1917. This is the first of three schools to carry the name Alamo. By 1930 it was no longer being used as a school. Its second story was removed in 1949 and the rest demolished in 1975. Its location was likely on W. Van Buren not far from the railroad tracks.

4/25/11 Andrew Goldammer is awarded a \$25,000 contract to build a three story brick schoolhouse on the northwest corner of Jackson and 6th Streets. J.P. McDonald is to supervise its construction. Another source puts the low-bid contract at \$22,800. Now called a \$40,000 school, it is nearing completion by 10/26/11. The building is accepted 3/25/12. First called the Central Ward School, it is, in 1936, renamed the Sam Houston School.

4/1/12 The Central Ward School is occupied. It serves as a school from 1912 to 1950 then several years as a community center. In 1952 it is purchased and renovated into an office complex named the E.O. Matz Building.

E.W. Anglin, a school board member in 1911-12, recalls, "We gathered up all the classes scattered about town on April 1, 1912 and moved them all to the new brick building on Jackson Street. The next year was a rainy one and we had to build a board walk all the way from downtown to the school."

1913 Enough boys are enrolled in the high school, so a 14 man football team organizes.

1913-18 Lyceum Courses for adults are held in the Central Ward School in these years.

5/14 The first graduating class (then 11 grades) of the Harlingen High School is composed of Roberta Chaudoin (later Mrs. I.E. (Renus) Snavelly), Murl and Gladys Snavelly, and Fred Osborn.

1915 The Wilson School at Primera to the west of J.F. Rodgers' place is built. Rodgers and J.T. Avery are its prime movers. Lilian Weems Baldrige is to be its first teacher.

The Sacred Heart of Mary opens a three room school. Three years later a fourth class room is added. It is located just south of the church on Winchell (now C) Street.

4/7/16 W.F. Jourdan is superintendent of schools and Pearl Botts is principal of the high school. Domestic science classes will be added next term. Miss Pearl Cleary is principal of the Wilson rural high school.

1918 This is the year Paul E. Phipps comes to the Valley where he later becomes Superintendent of McAllen schools for two years. He comes to Harlingen in 1922 and takes the same position here until 1933, the year of his death. He is a native of New Boston, MO having been born there 4/30/88. He was educated at Kirksville Teachers College in Missouri and Columbia University where he received an M.S. degree. He also has a Superintendent School Diploma from Columbia. This Methodist and Mason married Susan Case on 6/28/11. He was president of the Valley Mid-Winter Fair Association its first two years in Harlingen. Paul Earl Phipps was superintendent of schools in Princeton, Missouri in 1918 when, due to his father's health condition, he brought his family including his father, wife Susan Case, and daughter Jean to McAllen in the summer of 1918. Two years later he was selected to be Harlingen Superintendent of Schools, a position he filled until 1932. His daughter, Jean Phipps Clore, will provide a valuable service by documenting the history of the First Methodist Church in Harlingen.

Jennie Case comes to the Valley from Missouri. She is a graduate of the George Peabody College of Nashville. She and her sister, Mrs. Mattie Case (d.5/51), begin teaching in Harlingen in 1920. This First Methodist Church member dies 7/19/59 leaving a niece Jean Phipps Clore (here in 1920). Her brother-in-law, the late Paul Phipps, was an early Harlingen school superintendent.

1919 Some time before 1920, the population of rural Leeland to the west of Harlingen had grown enough that a school was warranted. A frame building consisting of two large rooms to serve all grades was erected at the corner of what is now Business 83 and Altas Palmas Roads. Before 1923 this facility was being outgrown, so a one room frame building was added to hold the first and second grades.

1920 The school enrollment at Central Ward and West Ward Schools is 284 pupils as the school year starts. The children of new arrivals will soon push it to 410. In the 1920s Harlingen segregates its Mexican surnamed school children through the 4-5th grades.

In this decade before the year 1925 the West Ward School is built in the east side of the 400 block of South F Street at 415. It is an attractive two-story brick structure. Its attendees are wholly Hispanic. By 1937 a larger facility is built at 501-2 South F and named the Alamo School. In 1970 or 1971 the school is closed. In the 1987 - 88 school year Alamo Jr. High School is to open at the present site of the Harlingen High School -South.

1921 Luz Ramirez, later to be Mrs. Bennie Leal of San Benito, is the first student of Mexican origin to be graduated from Harlingen High School. In 1922 Alfred Lozano, later to be Doctor Lozano, is the first Hispanic boy to be graduated.

6/19/21 A \$50,000 bond issue is voted by Stuart Place residents to construct a schoolhouse. Bob and O.E. Stuart donate 10 acres of land for its site. It is scheduled to be completed by January 1, 1922. Mrs. Hugh Fitzgerald is president of the board and Mrs. R. D. Corn secretary. The former is one of the few women in the state to hold such a position. B.A. Elwing and Roy Mulhausen, architects of San Benito and Harlingen, have submitted plans for a modern building to serve the 185 scholars presently enrolled in the district. The same architects have designed the \$50,000 new Harlingen High School. The 216' x 145' structure will have two wings each holding eight classrooms and be constructed by W.T.Liston and Son.

1921-23 In this school year 534 students are enrolled.

12/12/22 The School Board of Trustees appropriates \$60,000 for construction of a new senior high school. Its ornate twin-towered building is erected on the west side of the double block extending from 6th to 8th Street and between Polk and Tyler. It costs \$45,452.50. Four years later on the east side of the two block strip the main building is constructed for use as a junior high school. In the Hurricane of 1933 the first building sustains such serious structural damage that it has to be torn down. A gymnasium-auditorium is then built in the middle of the block. By 1937, the surviving structure called the Travis Junior High School operates at this place until 1949 when a new junior high school is constructed on 13th and Madison on land donated by the Minnie Gay family. The former junior high school, now turned into the Travis Elementary School, will be demolished along with the gymnasium when a new Travis Elementary School is build on the site but nearer 6th Street in the late 1970s.

1923 The Stuart Place School is dedicated. On the stone monument commemorating it are inscribed the names of the school board. They are: O.E. Stuart, president, J.J. Garrett, vice-president, Mrs. Hugh Fitzgerald, Secretary, W.H. Maupin, I.B. Corns, and H.C. West. A year later with the first graduated class comes the school's first edition of its annual, "Hoja de Palma". The school building will become the gathering place for the rural residents of the area and even be used for church activities. By 1928 the school will be fully accredited. The school building will become the gathering place for the rural residents of the area and even be used for church activities. By 1928 the school will be fully accredited.

June 1923 Seven boys and 13 girls are the first to be graduated from the Central Ward School after 11 years of instruction. Teacher Frank Brunneman has taught Richard Stout, Kenneth Macy, Raymond Rodgers, Frank Houghton, Margaret Thomason, Lucille Bobo, Roe Davenport, Velda Goldammer, Essie McLeod, Vera Letzerich, Maureen Elmore, Velma Baize, Mayme Anglin, Mary Jennings, and Gladys Word among others.

3/5/25 On this date it is announced that a bond issue for \$100,000 for new school construction will be voted on 4/4. At month end, Supt. Phipps, who has been here four years, is retained. The bond issue passes. Plans are to add an auditorium to the high school (blk. 45), additions to the Mexican School (blk.109), and repair the grade school (blk.50). Total expenditures will range from \$60,000 to \$65,000. By July a \$43,000 contract was let to H. J. Hanson and Son, Brownsville for new junior high school building to be erected next to the senior high school on 6th.

The cost of a 900 seat high school auditorium is put at \$21,000 with R. E. Ewing its contractor. W.T. Liston received the \$10,000 contract to add four classrooms, two on each side of the front of the Mexican School i.e. West Ward School on E Street. This would double its student capacity to accommodate its wholly Hispanic student body. After the renovation the school is called Ward West Junior High School. By 1937 a larger facility is built at adjacent 501-2 S. F Street and named the Alamo School. In 1970 or 1971 the school is closed but not demolished until 1975. In the 1987-88 school year Alamo Junior High School is to open at the present site of the Harlingen High School-South campus.

In 1925, newly elected to the school board of trustees are John Sanders and A.E. McLendon taking the places of John James and C.A. Bobo who do not choose to run again. Holdovers are president, B.H. Brindley, A.A. Kimmel, Paul Hill, L.M. Chaudoin, R. B. Nunally, with R. B. Hamilton, secretary. Residing in a large bungalow at 313 E. Monroe, John F. Sander's family includes John Jr., Joe G., and Bennie Ray. Joe G., a band member in 1931-32 along with brother Bennie, will distinguish himself at H.H.S. by being named All-District guard in 1935 and being elected president of the "Hy-Y" Club (1936).

5/10/25 The largest graduating high school class ever consists of 34 students.

9/25 G.W. Moothart, president, of Harlingen Business College, opens the school after obtaining a three year lease for space in the A.J. Wittenbach Building. He has operated a similar school in Brownsville.

1926 This is the year Lucy A. Phillips Gough started teaching in the Harlingen School District and which she would continue to do so for 26 years. Her specialty was 7th and 8th grade language arts. A native of Sealy, Texas from which school she was graduated in 1903, she then attended the Texas Normal School in the first year it was open. She taught eight years elsewhere before coming to Harlingen. This First Baptist Church member was an originator of the Fine Arts Club in Harlingen where she continued to live for 31 years after retirement. She was also a supporter of the Valley Baptist Academy and the library. In the 1980s she moved to Sealy where on 9/6/92 she celebrated her 107th birthday.

10/8/26 At a PTA meeting Supt. Butler of the Stuart Place School notes that the addition of four more credits this school year will bring the total to $17\frac{1}{2}$ or 18.

9/23/27 The Briggs-Coleman School, on what is later to be north FM 507, opens its school year in a new building. Prof. C.O. Slaughter is principal, Miss Jewel Hudson teacher of the elementary grades and Miss Mildred Hudson, the primary grades. In the 1970s after the school has closed the Country Playhouse will use the building to host amateur theatrical productions.

1928 The Lozano Building's upper floor is remodeled by Dr. Alfredo Lozano to convert it into Harlingen's first business college.

The city brags that six schools have been completed with a \$500,000 investment, and \$400,000 of bonds voted for a new high school and two others. School attendance is 2,564.

This same year the South Ward School at 306 W. Lincoln is erected. It is later renamed the James Bowie Elementary School. Its unique colorful cast-concrete frieze by Luiz Lopez Sanchez provides it the nickname, La Escuela de la Vibores (the school of snakes.) The façade blends Mexican and native-American motifs. At this time at 700 E. Austin the North Ward School, later to be called Austin Elementary, is built with designs by the Meriwether and Sauers Company. The combined cost for both is \$93, 258.50. Also started this year are portions of the Dishman School.

7/24/28 Several weeks earlier the school district boundaries were extended 900 acres to include Combes and a few other areas. R. B. Hamilton, board secretary, indicates the new Combes School will cost \$20,000 to construct. For the token amount of \$1 James Henry Dishman sells five acres of land to the HISD trustees in order for a school to be built in Combes. The trustees are O. N. Joyner, Miller Harwood, J. R. Grimes, H. J. Gostzke, A. E. McClendon, William Watterman and Frank Brunneman.

9/11/28 Schools are to open this date with an enrollment of 2,200 expected and this to rise to 2,600 later. Teachers in the system number 70. [This averages to 31.4 students per teacher.]

1/2/29 2,100 children are in school as of this mid-school year date. From 1920-21 when the school population was 816, the system gained only 305 to 1924-25 then 238 were added in 1925-26 bringing the 1926-27 start total to 1,475. This grew to 1,697 by January and 1,983 by April. The escalating growth indicates the dynamic development of the city in this period.

1/8/29 Dewitt and Washburn, Dallas are to be the architects for the new \$270,000 high school expected to be completed by January 1930.

2/14/29 W.L. Lehman, proprietor of the Valley Business College, dies at age 41. He leaves his wife and three small children.

4/29 Carl S. Chilton is the principal of the Central Ward Grammar School.

6/17/29 Large ads are carried urging residents to approve a supplemental bond issue of \$100,000 in order to finance the \$52,000 shortfall for the construction of the new high school but also \$20,000 for additions to the West Ward School, the same amount to pay off Comb School notes, and retire other indebtedness. The issue is to carry 278 to 217.

6/30 Student enrollment is put at 2,383.

9/4/30 Called "the showplace of the Valley", the new \$350,000 senior high school at 125 S. 13th Street at Harrison is dedicated. It is designed by architects Dewitt and Washburn of Dallas. The former designed the east wing of the White House. At this time the superintendent of schools is Paul E. Phipps. On the board of Trustees are Mrs. J.I. Coursey, O.N. Joyner, Ira E. Eells, S.D. Grant, A.E. McClendon, and Dr. John Crockett. The last senior class to use the facility is that of 1959 which started there but finished in the new high school on Marshall Street. The Spanish Revival style facility in 1958 becomes Vernon Junior High School named in honor of Julia Vernon, a popular English teacher and librarian for years at the high school.

The West Ward School is at 415 South F Street. Its principal is Mrs. Bertha J. Traylor. The South Ward School is at 309 W. Lincoln and Mrs. Lucy A. Gough is its principal. It will later be re-named the James Bowie Elementary School.

In 1930 the Harlingen Valley Business College was located at 215 $\frac{1}{2}$ W. Monroe. By 1937 the college was operating on the third floor of the Embee Building addition at 119 S. Street. When between 1938 and 1941 the Durham Business Institute took over the site, Mrs. Harman Straub moved her school to the Commerce Building at 121 W. Van Buren. She would close altogether by 1944. By 1942 the Embee school location had become the Durham Business College and was under the management of Carl A. Scott. It stayed in this location until 1958 then, after a year at 106 $\frac{1}{2}$ N 1st, moved to 5621 S. F Street. In the 70s it changed its name to Durham College of the Valley. Durham was to go out of business after 1973, possibly when it experienced difficulties with defaulted government student loans.

1933 The eighth grade class is moved to the high school building on 13th Street.

9/5/33 The Labor Day Hurricane of 1933 delays the start of school initially 9/18 to 9/25 and then to 10/2. The high school on 6th Street is damaged beyond repair as is the school for Negroes in the West side of town. The North and South Ward Schools suffer only minor damage. The number of students is put at 3,430, down 147 from the previous year.

1934 The Booker T. Washington School to serve Harlingen's Negro children is erected in the 800 block of W. Filmore at H Street. As the number of blacks diminishes over the years it will be integrated. Although an addition to it will later be made, it is to be superceded. It ceases to be used as a school in 1959. It currently is being used by the school district as a Parental Involvement Center.

In the Fall of this year the Cardinal Football Field is constructed at the cost of \$4,500. It is adjacent to the high school.

1936 The school system has 80 teachers.

1937 The new Alamo Elementary School is operating at 501-21 South F Street. By 1970 it ceases to function.

In this period E.C. Deering is superintendent of schools. He holds a BA from Baylor University and an MA from the University of Texas. D.M. Denton, who is the high school principal, holds an AB degree from Baylor University.

1940 Durham's Business College opens to train people in stenographic, secretarial, and office skills.

1940-41 It is thought that it is this school year that the Harlingen public school system added the twelfth grade. Previously only eleven grades were taught. The end of the 1941-42 school year sees the conclusion of 11 years of matriculation for grade school students to receive their high school diploma. Across Texas the school years offered are now extended through grade twelve. Some transitional scheduling for 11-12 graders is offered the next two years.

1941 The Bryne Select School of Business is at 117 $\frac{1}{2}$ W. Jackson. It exists only this one year. Mrs. Harry (Ethel) Eggleston is superintendent. Her husband is the owner of the Merchants Credit Bureau.

12/31/42 The school enrollment is 3,125 with a faculty of 97. As 1943 commences the public schools are: Harlingen Senior High School (13th St.), Travis Junior High (Polk), Sam Houston, James C. Bowie, Stephen F. Austin, Alamo, Booker T. Washington, and James F. Dishman. The total investment in the physical plants was \$800,000. The 75 member uniformed high school band was a proud achievement.

7/25/46 A school to be associated with St. Anthony's Catholic Church, about to be dedicated, is itself dedicated. Its first classes are held 9/1/46.

9/47 The Valley Baptist Academy gets its start in Harlingen under the sponsorship of the Rio Grande Baptist Association. Its mission is to teach grade school children primarily from Latin America areas. Its first home is an old store building on E. Madison. Here 28 are enrolled. In its second year it moves to Brownsville and remains there until 1956 when the old Valley Baptist Hospital, 613 South F Street in Harlingen becomes available. By 1962 it has 107 students, 88 of whom live in its dormitories. This same year it becomes an institution of the Valley Baptist Convention of Texas and by 1972 is a primary project of Texas Baptist Men. In 1964, 44 acres of land for a new campus, 5700 E. Harrison, are donated. When the 1972 school season starts and the Academy celebrates its 25th Anniversary it has 165 students, grades 8 to 12, from the U.S. and 11 other countries, mostly Mexico and Central America. The campus has five dormitories, classroom and administrative buildings, the president's house and four faculty houses. There is a staff of 20 teachers, administrative and maintenance personnel. At this time Dr. H.E. Gray has served as the Academy's president since 1952.

Some years after the F Street Valley Baptist structure is demolished, the multi-unit, two-story Robin Hood Apartments are constructed on the site.

1948 St. Alban's Episcopal Day School is established. Its first year sees 28 three to five year olds for the half day sessions. By 2003 this accredited school serves pre-school (age 2 through 6th grade.) The intervening years had seen numerous transitions, especially after the air base closed. By 1956-57 there were 85 students through the newly added third grade. A fourth grade was added the following school year only to see a retrenchment of both grades in 1958-59.

In this year the West Ward Elementary School is in the 600 block of South J. By 1950 it has been renamed the Thomas Jefferson Elementary School.

The St. Paul Lutheran School is established at Third and Tyler. Its goal is to educate elementary students together with Christian overtones. The school will later expand to handle kindergarten through 8th grade.

12/21/48 A site is given by R.E. Smith of Houston in memory of his mother Minnie B. Gay of Brownsville. Smith is an oil operator in Conroe. The deed is given to J. Lewis Boggus, president of the school board. Smith is cited as trustee for his daughter, Bobbie Sue Smith, 1 year old, for whom the tract had been given. Mrs. Gay came to Brownsville from Jefferson, TX in 1908. Her husband, Portes Gay, was chief of the Border Patrol at Brownsville. The 40 acre tract was acquired by Mrs. Gay in 1918 and remained in tact until the railroad cut through leaving 37 acres. Of this, 6.8 acres has been given for the school site next to Cardinal Field. Brownsville attorney Robin Pate, a family friend, is credited with generating the gift. On hand are board members Arthur Purdy, F. Earl Davis, T.D. King, J.R. Fitzgerald, Guy Leggett, and W.W. Ballard business manager.

1949 The Minnie Gay Junior High School comes into existence on 13th at Madison. In the 1990s its name is changed to Memorial Middle School as a bone to "political correctness" since the word "gay" has become synonymous with homosexual.

1950 The school system has 5,662 students.

The Fair Park Elementary at 1406 W. Jefferson will become the David Crockett Elementary School in 1952. The new Travis Elementary will open at 700 E. Taylor.

The short-lived Colonial Acres Elementary is at 500 Elm, which is near the airport.

1/23/50 Gay Junior High School to accommodate 630 students is set to open. It features a \$365,000 ultra-modern auditorium seating 548. It was designed by Cocke, Bowman and York.

1952 The city has one high school, one junior high school, and eleven elementary schools. There are 5,762 students enrolled under a faculty of 240. The high school now has a 100 member uniformed marching band. Supplementing the public school system are two Catholic parochial schools, one Episcopalian and one Lutheran school each. There are three vocational schools and Durham's Business College with its capacity of 125 students. The Dishman and Wilson School systems have been integrated into the new Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District (HCISD).

1954 The Zavala Elementary School, 1111 North B comes into being as does Bonham at 2400 E. Jefferson..

3/56 The city has one high school, one junior high school, and thirteen elementary schools. The physical plant is valued at \$4,170,000. A faculty of 320 serves 10,390 children.

Lamar Elementary School comes online at 1100 McLarry road.

2/14/59 Joel Hendrix Murray of 1307 E. Filmore dies. He came to the Valley from Stephenville in 1921 and until seven years ago was building superintendent of Harlingen schools.

12/19/58 Is the date of the first occupation of the new Harlingen High School on E. Marshall. It costs \$1,485,000 including the grounds according to Warren W. Ballard, school business manager. H. Callihan is serving his first year as superintendent of schools. On 1/26/59 it is officially dedicated. Speakers are Dr. Ernest H. Poteet, president of Texas College of Arts and Industry. He was superintendent of schools here for 7 ½ years. J. Gordon Nix is to be principal of the school constructed by W. B. Uhlhorn.

9/23/59 The HISD is to put forth a \$450,000 bond issue.

1960 The new Sam Houston School, an elementary one, opens at 301 E. Taft bringing the city's total to 14. The HISD this year has 10,463 students and 402 teachers.

3/1/60 The school board approves new \$911,654 second junior high school to be built at Coakley Village and the submission of a bond issue to cover its cost. Last week it approved three elementary schools - one at Coakley Village, one Rangerville Road and one at 1st Street and Davis. Coakley Village is on the C.R. Jullian Coakley Estates. The school will eventually be named for Mary E. Coakley. By 6/7/60 plans are drawn for this school.

The Ben Milam Elementary School is being built at 1215 Rangerville Road.

8/23/60 The school budget of \$4,715, 299 is approved. It necessitates raising the district tax rate from \$1.50 to \$1.70. When the schools open in September there are 8,931 registered students with the breakdown: 5,689 elementary, 2,175 Gay Jr. High, and 1,067 Harlingen High School according to Supt. C.M. Callihan.

3/22/61 Adams Bothers General Construction Co. of Brownsville is awarded the contract for the \$602,187 cost of the Coakley Jr. High School. In 1/62 when it comes in at \$700,000 the city lacks money for paving 6th Street and the Taft crossing. The school district then says it will not open Coakley this school year.

4/6/61 In view of the announced HAFB closing the school board holds in abeyance the construction of 10 new classrooms.

6/1/61 High school graduates number 257.

8/13/61 The \$810/yr teacher pay raise will cost the district, which pays about 13% of the teacher's salaries, \$50,000. The base minimum is presently \$4,014 annually. The 400 plus teachers here received a raise of \$120 last year. In 1960-61 the district received \$2,215,863 from the state. About 11,500 students are expected to register for the 1961-62 school year up from 10,976 of 60-61. When a count is made in November, the number of 10,314 is actually down.

9/3/61 A shop and a 12-classroom wing have been added to the Harlingen High School.

11/2/61 The school enrollment is down for the 1961-62 school year to 10,314 from its level of 10,564 in 1960-61.

2/8/62 Twelve additional classrooms are approved for the high school.

4/20/62 Warren W. Ballard, for 30 years business manager of the Harlingen School System, resigns. He started work here in 12/1/30. The dual system of management since 1920 will be abandoned and the Supt. of Schools will control all aspects.

5/18/62 John H. Morgan superintendent of the Taft School System is named superintendent of Harlingen schools. His three year contract called for a salary of \$16,000 per annum and a car allowance of \$100 per month.

5/27/62 The completion of the Mary E. Coakley Junior High School is one year late. Its total cost is \$750,000 for the building, paving, and equipment. In September 1,000 students are expected to attend it.

5/30/62 There are 251 graduates of Harlingen High School.

8/62 The La Motte School (T.M.R.) at 216 N. 21st is opened to handle special students.

6/63 By this date the Alamo School on S. E Street had grown to have in addition to its main building to the north and two annex building to its south. Total classroom and administration area was 11,724 sq. ft. An auditorium to the northwest was an additional 4,500 sq. ft.

10/25/63 The old high school, now a junior high school is renamed in honor of Julia Vernon. Julia Shawson, the third child of Andrew Jackson and Elizabeth Ann (Ray) Shawson, was born 10/24/93 in Youngsport, Bell County, TX. She came to Harlingen in the 1920s and married Thomas Spillar Vernon of West Virginia in Brownsville on 12/22/26. They made their home at 1218 E. Harrison but had no children. She obtained a 1923 teaching degree from Southwest Texas State Teacher's College, and later added a B.A. from Texas A&I, an M.A. from her first college in 1949, and a B.A. in library science from Texas State College for Women in 1951. In Harlingen she taught elementary school children, then middle school English, and finally high school students before becoming the high school librarian. She organized the chapter of Future Teachers of America at the high school and the chapter was named after her. Her husband died of diabetes complications in 1947. This much-loved educator passed away in Waco at age 88 on 6/29/82.

1965 It is this year that Harlingen College, a business school, establishes itself at 513 E. Jackson in the Matz Building. It is started by key personnel of the San Antonio Business College in that city. O.N. Bard, who worked for them in 1964-65, moves back here and becomes its first manager in 1965.

9/65 The first classes, with 59 students, of the Marine Military Academy take place at old wartime facilities of the Air Force Navigation School at the deactivated Harlingen Air Force Base. The academy for high school students follows elements traditional to the U.S. Marine Corps. Prior to 1965 the founders of MMA planned to locate in Prescott, AZ. A Marine recruiter in Harlingen, Gunnery Sgt. John S. Allerton, read about the proposed academy in Leatherneck. He showed the article to Sam Searles, then a major in the Army Reserve and an official of the Harlingen National Bank. Searles was a former Marine Corps sergeant-major. He spoke to city officials about the academy. The organizers visited here and liked what they saw. Funding came from many sources. One major one was J.D. Stetson Coleman, a WWII Marine Corps Veteran. He bought 26 buildings and about 83 acres from the city for \$55,000. He also secured a half million dollar loan and paid the interest on it for the first three years. By 1985 the academy had nearly 400 cadets, 37 teachers, and an annual budget of \$3 million for its now 139 acre campus. Its 1981 class had 20 going on to the U.S. Naval Academy, and one the Air Force Academy. Sixteen others received full ROTC scholarships to attend college, with 41 others accepted at major colleges and universities.

In this year the Alamo School at 512 South E is noted as (migrant).

This year the St. Paul Lutheran School is located near the church sanctuary. Nearby is built a facility to house five classrooms, a parish hall, and a staff workroom. The educational program is to grow. In 1973 a Day Care program is initiated as part of the Early Childhood Education Center. The first year 19 children are under the care of Barbara McCaslin. In 1977 this program is integrated into developmental programs for two-year old through eighth grade. In 1981 the construction of a 4-room building allows all classes to be in separate rooms. A school library is added in 1986.

1967 O. N. Bard of Harlingen College leaves the school and together with local businessmen forms the Valley Central College (VCC). By 1968 it was located at 119 W. Van Buren where its competitor, Harlingen College (HC), had moved to in 1966. HC advertises that it offers courses in shorthand, accounting, office machines, bookkeeping, drafting, electronics, air conditioning, refrigeration, and heating. While offering similar studies VCC has both a two year plan and short course. VCC will establish satellite facilities in Brownsville by 1970 and also in McAllen. In a dispute with directors over the profitability of VCC, Bard leaves and Ray Martin becomes general manager by 1971. In 1975 VCC ceases to function while HC had closed in 1973.

1967 Texas State Technical Institute (later to be renamed College) -Harlingen, also known as the Rio Grande Campus begins operation as an extension of the Waco Campus of the Texas State Technical Institute (also called the James Connally Technical Institute). Located at the former HAFB, it starts with two instructors and 40 students. In 1967 it is separated from the Texas A&M system. By 9/69 it is offering classes for credit; 78 students are taking classes.

4/70 Students number 11,000 in Harlingen schools. The school budget is \$5.6 million, \$712,893 from federal sources. The monthly HCISD budget is \$345,776.

9/70 TSTI has four new buildings nearly completed. They will add 83,000 square feet to the existing 114,493.

7/18/73 The School Board votes to close all elementary school campuses at the start of the school year. This means children must stay on the campus rather than going home for lunch or elsewhere.

1974 TSTI has 1,262 students.

2/75 TSTI has recently spent \$2 million in constructing six buildings, a cafeteria, student center, swimming pool, and dormitories. It is about to make use of two hangers adjacent to the runway.

1975 (fall) The A.O.C. Dent Building is added to help hold the increased enrollment of students at St. Alban's. Surplus military barracks purchased in the 1960s are removed. In 1983 this will be followed by the Marian Cocke Building with its eight class rooms and the main office building. Leon Daniell and Dr. Clark are to provide an activities center and paved play area in 1985. This latter year is to see the first graduation of sixth graders from the school and four years later the school will receive accreditation. The Cocke building will receive an addition in 1993. By 1999, 8,000 pupils will have gone through the school.

At this same time Calvary Baptist Church on 7th Street institutes its Cavalry Christian School. It commences with a school for the youngest children then incrementally adds grades annually until it serves 2 year olds through the eighth grade. Shirley Ashley is the school's first director. By the school year 2004-05 there are over 25 classrooms. Plans are to add 9th and 10th grade levels in 2005-06. These will be housed in two portable buildings having six rooms total. The brick classroom wing on the north side was constructed in 1984. The two story \$750,000 gymnasium and six classroom structure was completed in 2003. School tuition is relatively nominal and payments are spread over an eleven month period.

10/20/75 The new \$759,627 Travis Elementary School built to accommodate 720 students is dedicated. SHWC, Inc. is its architect while the Eddleblute Constuction Co. erected it. In attendance are Dr. Norma Schultz, president of the school board, J. Gordon Nix, principal, and former superintendent of schools, James I. Thigpen.

This year Allan Brumley becomes head band director at Harlingen High School and will occupy that position until 1981 when he resigns to go into the insurance business. In 1980 the high school band will be named one of the Top

Ten High School Bands in the country. In 1981 the band with over 300 members marches in the Tournament of Roses Parade on New Years Day in California. In its first appearance it is the largest marching unit in the parade.

1976 Jo Ellen Paschall, wife of Dr. Charles Paschall, founds the University Preparatory School, a four year accredited facility. By 1985 it has 47 students and 5 certified teachers. In 5/77 it bought its 6 acre campus on Breedlove Street.

The HCISD initiates the first HOSTS (Help One Student To Succeed) Program in the state. Volunteers mentor students needing extra reading and math skills. By 2003, 975 mentors coach students in each and every school.

4/76 There is a school bond issue election. Sought is approval to replace the old Travis School, create a new cafeteria at Bowie, build a new Primera School and a gym at Gay-Vernon, all for \$1.98 million; air condition all schools at a cost of \$2.2 million; build a Central Media Center for \$150,000.

1978 Basketball coach Carl Owens comes to HHS. With the Cardinals until his resignation in February 2003, he amasses 570 wins over the 25 year span. His overall career coaching record is 809 wins and 387 losses. In his tenure the Cards win 11 district titles and make 19 playoff appearances. In 1973 he led tiny Kennard High School to a 2A State Championship.

Dr. J. Gilbert Leal becomes Texas State Technical Institute president after being on the faculty nine years. At this time the school's 44 acres have nine instructional buildings, a staff of 184, and an enrollment of 992 students.

6/78 By a large margin the \$14 million school bond issue is defeated.

1980-81 School district enrollment reaches 12,502 students.

6/20/84 City permit is granted for the HCISD to build the Jane Long Elementary School at 2601 North 7th Street.

1985 TSTI has 2,359 students, 138 full time faculty, 153 non-faculty employees and an annual budget of \$7,619,836.

1986 Jack Hatfield, executive with the Valley Morning Star, and others establish The Literacy Center of Harlingen. It will eventually become a Council Member of Laubach Literacy Action, one of the largest literacy providers in the U.S. By 2005 the local center provides instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL), Basic Instruction for English Speakers who need to learn how to read and write, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) training, Pre GED training, Basic Math instruction, and Citizenship Preparation.

5/3/87 The Alamo School, 1701 Dixieland Road, designed by Lubunski Associates Architects is dedicated. The new junior high school opens in September in an undeveloped area west of the Municipal Golf Course. J. Glen Cleckner is its principal. Initially it serves only 9th graders, but plans are for it to accommodate 10th graders in the 1988-89 school year. This will later be the site of Harlingen High School-South.

Major General Harold Glasgow, USMC (ret.) assumes the position of superintendent of the Marine Military Academy. By 1989 the enrollment is up to 375, who are offered college preparatory course, grades 8 through 12.

1990 A group of concerned business people in the community form the Harlingen Area Education Foundation. Over a twelve year period it will grow to encompass New Directions, a leadership, tutoring, and mentoring program for high school students; New Directions, a similar program for middle school students; Texas Scholars, a curriculum improvement program that requires 24 graduation credits in college entry subjects; and Technology Academies dealing with computer literacy. The Foundation is financially supported by Harlingen businesses and individuals.

9/91 By an act of the 72nd legislature the Texas State Institute-Harlingen becomes the Texas State Technical College-Harlingen. Its Harlingen campus library holds 16,000 books. It has a faculty of 141 for 2,623 enrolled students.

8/91 The HCISD opens the KEYS Academy on North 7th Street near Loop 499. It is a non-traditional school for at-risk students. In 1994 Yolanda Gutierrez becomes its principal.

1992 The first "Bird Bowl" football game is played as the new Harlingen High School

South Hawks play the Harlingen High School Cardinals.

9/98 The Valley High School, a private charter school, opens at 2701 Breedlove Street. It crafts its mission at "high risk" students with histories of low academic scores. In November 2002 the State threatens its closure due to its poor performance and higher than allowed dropout rate for its 300 elementary, 30 middle school, and 150 high school students.

1993 The Harlingen CISD initiates the New Pathways Center. Its motto is "Guiding One Child at a Time." At its 208 South F Street campus, it offers services to elementary students who may struggle with disciplinary problems at their regular campus. Dr. Mary Brower will be its principal and director for at least its first ten years.

11/96 Texas Monthly in its cover article "Our Best Schools"(elementary) names Harlingen Long, Wilson, Treasure Hills and Stuart Place as four-star, the highest ranking.

4/26/98 At the Vernon Middle School a \$1.36 million gym is going up to replace the 1939 "the Barn" gymnasium. At Zavala, Dishman, Bonham, and Milam Elementary Schools older classrooms are being renovated as part of a \$5.415 million upgrading project. The district has invested \$58 million in expansion and improvement projects since 1989 in order to serve the now 16,000 students coming from Harlingen and Combes, Primera, Palm Valley, and Stuart Place as well.

1999 The HCISD tax goes up 10 cents as voters pass an \$80 million bond issue for the HCISD, but use of the monies is not implemented until 2002-03. Projects include athletic field houses, performing arts building and expansion of current and existing classrooms. Each of the two high schools will have new soccer dimension stadiums with bleachers on each side, press box, restroom facilities, and concession stands. Harlingen HS South's field will be constructed on Dixieland Road and Harlingen HS on an open field located south of Keys Academy. The new athletic field houses at each school will occupy 16,000 square feet. Approximately 42,000 square feet will be added to each school at the cost of \$21 million. Boggus Stadium will also be improved.

In this year St. Paul Lutheran School has obtained the former Army Reserve Center at 1920 E. Washington. It is given the property by the Federal government as it has been declared surplus but with the stipulation that it has to be used for educational purposes for a period of 30 years. It is completely renovated and 40% new construction added along with a full-size gymnasium. It opened for school on 10/9/99. The facility has modern classrooms, fully equipped science laboratory, art room, and music room. It has been part of the educational system operated by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

5/12/00 Cesar Morales, a Zapata native, retires after being Lamar Elementary School principal for 30 years. He attended Texas A & I College and began his teaching career in 1962 at Gay Junior High School.

5/20/00 Verna Young retires after 46 years of service in the HCISD. She began teaching math in 1953 at Gay, served as principal at Bonham Elementary 1975-1984 when she became Harlingen High School principal until this date. She was later elected to the school board.

2/25/01 Jefferson Elementary School and Memorial Middle School are having extensive work done. The jobs are worth \$1.8 million and \$4.5 million respectively.

4/18/01 Travis Elementary School soon will undergo a \$1.8 million upgrade for its 535 students. Treasure Hill Elementary School will get \$3.25 million for renovations for its 658 students. Other expenditures are \$11.5million for Harlingen High School South and \$9.95 million for Harlingen High School.

2002 After 55 years of existence the Rio Grande Valley Baptist Academy ceases its operation.

9/02 TSTC enrollment continues to climb year to year. On 9/00 it was 3,228, 3,841 in 9/01 and 4,217 this date.

2002 (summer) Memorial Middle School is extensively updated.

10/3/02 As the Texas State Technical College-Harlingen celebrates Pres. J. Gilbert Leal's 24 years in office, it has grown on its current 124.5 acre campus to 69 buildings, more than 500 employees, and more than 4,000 credit students. Since 1978 projects added have included 14 instructional buildings, the Student Center, the Fieldhouse, a child-care center, a service support center, and a work force center. These have been valued at more than \$30

million. The property inventory has grown to almost \$35 million and the annual budget exceeds \$38 million. The fall 2001 enrollment was 3,842 and in 2002 was 4,618. Earlier this year TSTC Chancellor, Dr. Bill Segura, named Leal Vice-Chancellor for Border Opportunity Development.

5/03 The Valley Baptist Academy closes permanently at the end of the school year. It is then utilized as the Valley Baptist Mission Education Center.

5/25/03 Construction begins at TSTC for a new Learning Resource Center. Scheduled for completion in October, the two story facility with 35,000 sq. ft. will house the library media center, a library instructional classroom, a spacious lobby, circulation area, study rooms, as well as reference and general collection areas. It is dedicated on 1/22/04.

7/12/03 St. Anthony's Catholic Church opens a middle school for 7th and 8th graders after having closed one in the 1960s when the HAFB ceased operating. The physical plant is at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church on C Street.

2004 A partnership involving the auto industry and others contributes to the school sports infrastructure. Knapp Chevrolet and Valley Baptist Medical Center donate \$250,000 each for the project while Hino Gas and Electric adds \$200,000. High tech scoreboards are constructed at the Boggus Stadium and also some middle school fields.

5/12/04 Diana Walker, a third grade teacher at Calvary Christian School for eleven years, is selected as teacher of the year '04 from 18 school districts. The honor comes from Freedom Communication Newspapers in Education.

4/05/04 Clearing begins at the site of the new elementary school on FM 2994 (Wilson Road) on its north side about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile west of its intersection with Stuart Place Road. It had been a sugarcane field farmed by Frank Burns. Construction of the school designed by FRO International, architectural engineers, and erected by the Sam Corp, general contractor, and both of McAllen is two-thirds along by early August. The school will have 85,324 sq. ft. The Rodriguez Elementary School, named after the Harlingen doctor, will not be ready for a September school year opening, so the 500 students who will occupy the school are diverted to temporary quarters behind the Wilson Elementary School according to school principal, Traci Gonzalez. The greatly growing school population has put the district under a strain. Construction projects under way include: Austin and Bowie Elementary Schools, classroom renovations by 1/05; Stuart Place and Wilson Elementary schools, classroom renovations by 5/05; a new middle school, total construction by 7/05; and Harlingen High School, campus renovations and extra-curricular facilities by 11/05.

8/04 The HCISD has a teaching staff of 1,250.

9/7/04 While construction continues on some parts of the school, 27 rooms of the Rodriguez Elementary School welcome new students.

11/04 Edwin and Corinne Swaney publish their 364-page book, "Marching in Cadence: The History of MMA." Sale proceeds will go to the Marine Military Academy. Mr. Swaney volunteers at the MMA Iwo Jima Museum which he helped establish.

12/15/04 After the 15-member nomination committee recommends it, the school board votes for the name Moises V. Vela Middle School, in honor of the city judge and former county commissioner. The school, costing \$13.5 million, is located off Palm Blvd., .3 mile south of Business 83. When opened in August 2005 it will serve about 684 students.

TSTC see a 19.3 % enrollment increase from its spring 2004 numbers. 4,461 are currently enrolled with 845 as new students. The percentage over 35 years in age is increasing steadily. Currently 50% are in the 18 to 24 age group; 20% between 25 to 35; and 30% 36 years or older.

3/11/05 The Dr. Hesiquio Rodriguez Elementary School is officially dedicated. This gentleman graduated as valedictorian of the Harlingen High School class of 1935, when he was 15. By the time he was 22 he was a practicing doctor, having received his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Center in 1942. While serving in the U.S. Army 1942-45 he interned in St. Louis where he met and married psychiatric nurse Annabel Alberts. He served on the Rio Hondo School Board 1948-51 before moving back to Harlingen in 1954. He died in 1977 at age 58.

Among 60 Rodriguez relatives present at the ribbon cutting ceremony were the doctor's widow Ann Rodriguez Guerrero, daughter Suzanne Rodriguez Jones, and his son Charles Rodriguez.

4/8/05 The school district is considering the expenditure of \$1.068 million to renovate and upgrade a deteriorating Boggus Stadium.

5/1/05 Calvary Baptist School announces that it will commence high school classes for grades 9 and 10 for the school year 2005-06. Two portable buildings have been set up to accommodate the new classes. The next phase in the school's plans is the construction of a library, expansion of the early childhood center, and making all handicapped accessible. Later a permanent high school structure will be erected and 11th and 12th grade classes added. A fundraising goal is \$778,000, of which \$260,000 is earmarked for the high school.

6/11/05 Nora "Coach Z" Zamarripa is inducted into the RGV Sports Hall of Fame. At this time the high school girl's basketball coach has a record of 528 wins and 223 losses in a career at Edinburg and Harlingen High Schools. This Lyford native has come a long way since hoeing cotton field on her parent's farm. She played basketball herself at Lyford going on to play at Texas A & I University in Kingsville where she changed her major from business to physical education. She then started her ongoing 25 year coaching career characterized by "an intensity that can be fierce."

2006 The Moises Vela Middle School is constructed on Palm Blvd, just south of Business 83. It required \$13 million.

12/8/06 It is announced that over the next seven months the last of the \$80 million 1999 school bond issue money will go toward renovations of school district-owned Boggus Stadium. The 9,000-seat facility will get enclosures under the bleachers, more restrooms, and slimmed-down light towers for an estimated \$2 million.

2/2/06 A survey reveals that the HCISD salaries are in line with the state average. Serving 17,660 students Harlingen teachers start at \$34,000 with the average salary for all teachers being \$41,790. The latter is \$76 less than the state average of \$41,866. The district also pays additional supplemental stipends for attendance, and programs such as band, sports, theater.

2/4/06 TSTC Regents OK transfer of up to 48 hours credit from the school's curricular to a student moving on to a four-year university. The board also approved a \$1.275 million purchase of a 42 acre tract south of Rio Hondo Road and between Loop 499 and 25th Street. This will allow for future expansion.

A Harlingen Cemetery Chronology

12/10/09 Seventeen year old Robert Keen Weems is to die in an industrial accident. Town founder, Lon C. Hill, in a telegram from St. Louis designates a site along the San Benito Highway, now South F Street, for the burial.

2/1/12 Initially the Harlingen Cemetery Association, an offshoot of the Harlingen Civic Club (a women's organization), handles burial arrangements, but upon the club's recommendation the Harlingen Land and Water Company sells 7.6 acres for one dollar to the Trustees for the Harlingen Cemetery. These were B.F. Surface, C.W. Clift, and E.W. Anglin.

2/1/21 -7/45 Sexton E.H. Pinkerton signs all burial permits under the aegis of the Harlingen Cemetery Association.

5/9/47 The Trustees deed the cemetery property to the City of Harlingen. Prior to this date the cemetery includes two major sections. F Street to E Street is the "American Section, and E Street to D Street is the "Mexican Section". Other areas were designated for blacks and for babies. After this month, grave sites may be selected regardless of ethnic or racial origin.

1962 The Tip-O-Texas Genealogical Society surveys and records graves in the cemetery.

1974 The City Commission authorizes a hurricane fence topped with barbed wire to surround the cemetery and two lockable gates. These are erected around the site to stop vandalism. Although the cemetery had a sexton or caretaker, it became neglected in appearance over time.

1981 The Harlingen Cemetery is included in the Harlingen Register of Historic Places.

1982 The Tip-O-Texas Genealogical Society updates, corrects, and alphabetizes the Harlingen Cemetery grave list.

1984 Thanks to the efforts of Mrs. Menton (Betty) Murray, who compiles a history of the cemetery among other lobbying work, a Texas Historical Commission Marker is obtained for the Harlingen Cemetery.

2000s Harlingen Proud, the city, and other organizations take a renewed interest in the cemetery, its heritage, and its maintenance.