



The Whistle Stop

A Publication of the Irving Heritage Society

March 2025

Valentine Tea: A Blend of Heritage and Heart

The 47th Annual Vintage Valentine Tea on Sunday, Feb. 16 welcomed both new and longtime visitors to the Heritage House for an afternoon of preserving history, creating new memories, and celebrating community. The event also heralded the 2025 Sweethearts — congratulations to Sharon and Dwane Crain!

A number of families brought multiple generations, continuing the tradition of attending with children, some of whom have been attending since infancy.

Special thanks to Linda Smith and Karen Martin for chairing the event, and to Judy Pierson, Sara Henderson, and Kevin Morrow for their invaluable help.

One of the key stops of the day was a photo opportunity courtesy of Bill Holcomb: guests posed with a 1930 Model A Tudor Sedan, a two-door classic with an odometer reading of 34,400 miles. (Fact: If this model had been a four-door version, it would have been called a “Fordor” Sedan.)



(Photos from top to bottom: 1. Honorees, front row, left to right, 2025 Sweethearts Dwane and Sharon Crain; back row, left to right, event co-chair Linda Smith, President Judy Pierson, President-Elect Nikisha McDaniel, and event co-chair Karen Martin. 2. This year's Sweethearts posing with the classic car. 3. Taking tea with past presidents Mary Moorman and Marlene Steward./Photos Irving Heritage Society.)

A Word from the President

The Irving Heritage Society, founded in 1978 with the mission of building a museum, has achieved that goal with the award-winning Irving Archives and Museum.

According to the charter, the organization will remain established for a period of 50 years. We will reach this half-century milestone in 2028, a few short years from now.

Questions are: **What do we want the organization to look like in the next five years, and how do we plan to achieve these changes?**

With guidance from Museum Director Jenn Landry and Museum Advancement Coordinator Allyss Flores, we have started the process of strategic planning, supported by a steering committee.

Planning sessions were held Feb. 21 and Feb. 22, and the results will be announced at a later date.

Looking ahead, we are pleased to welcome Karen Martin as our new Executive Director, who most recently served as co-chair of this year's Valentine Tea.

Thank you and please keep up the enthusiasm!

Judy Pierson
2024-2025 President

Yearbooks Available Now

Pick up a yearbook at a First Sunday Tour or by calling (972) 721-2655 for free delivery within Irving.

Upcoming Events

Monthly Tours Resume in March

**First Sunday of each month
March through December
Heritage House and Mary's Playhouse
303 S. O'Connor Road, 2 to 4 p.m.**

Free tours of this Recorded Texas Historic Landmark are offered on the first Sunday of the month and are open to the public. This year marks a special occasion, 10 years since the completion of the restoration and rededication of Mary's Playhouse.

Invite family and friends to explore Irving's history and engage with other members of the community — watch a virtual tour at <http://www.irvingheritage.com>, then plan an in-person visit!

For details about volunteering as a docent, contact Executive Director Karen Martin at irvingheritage@gmail.com or (972) 721-2655.

Celebrating Irving

Who will claim the title of Irving Trivia Champion? Join the 18th Annual Irving Trivia Contest on Saturday, April 26 at 9 a.m. in the auditorium of the Jack D. Huffman Community Building, 801 W. Irving Blvd.

This event is part of April's annual series Celebrating Irving: The City and The Man, and is hosted by the Irving Heritage Society in partnership with the Irving Public Library, Irving Black Arts Council, Irving Independent School District, and the City of Irving.

This friendly competition welcomes both teams and individuals, and the winning team takes home the coveted traveling trophy and bragging rights! To sign up, call Mary Higbie at (972) 252-3838.

More to Come in May

Get ready for an a-May-zing month!

Spend a sweet Sunday at the Heritage House on May 4 at 2 p.m. for the General Meeting, Installation of the Board, and the ever-popular Ice Cream Social. Afterward, explore the charm and history of the house with tours from 3 to 4 p.m.

Another important date to save is Friday, May 9 for the Annual Fish Fry. Additional details will follow soon.

General Meeting: 60 Years of Irving Healthcare

The November General Meeting featured *60 Years of Irving Healthcare: Honoring Our Legacy, Building Our Future*, a look at the evolution of healthcare over the past decades as well as in the present and beyond.

John Drake, president of the Irving Healthcare Foundation, served as moderator of a panel of professionals who have played key roles in the health community. Discussion panelists included:

- Dr. Ronald Aebersold – internist
- Dr. Steven Bell – internist
- Dr. Robert Bettis – dentist
- Dr. Bruce Faust – orthopedic surgeon
- Dr. Roy Reid – general surgeon
- Dr. Skip Wilson – hospital administrator

Following the discussion, guests were invited to celebrate this legacy by visiting the temporary exhibit at the Irving Archives and Museum.

In Memoriam

Ruben Carranza
James Deatherage
Shirley Dobson
Jim Dunkley
Dr. Robert Fong
Betty Jo Fulbright
Dr. F.M. Gilbert
Benny Griffin
W.C. “Dub” Hackley
Byron Killen
Dr. Alan Miller
Bobby Joe Raper, Former Irving Mayor (1981-1987, 1993-1995)
Cydney Roberts
Barbara Schoemaker
Patrick Shields
Patty Singleton

Mary’s Playhouse: Past and Present

Mary’s Playhouse, a highlight of the First Sunday Tours, celebrates the 10th anniversary of its restoration and rededication this year.

Located in the back garden of the Schulze family’s former home, this structure was originally a chicken coop in the 1920s, then converted into a retreat for the family’s daughter Mary to play, read, and study. Years later, the family donated the property to the City of Irving.

By 2012, the playhouse was in disrepair, prompting the Irving Heritage Society to initiate a restoration effort. Led by committee chair Patty Caperton, later president of the Heritage Society, the project was completed in 2015 with support from members, the community, the City’s Capital Improvement Program, Vernon Proctor of Mart, Inc., and F&F Concrete.

Special Thanks to Corporate Members!



Irving Heritage Society
P. O. Box 171572
Irving, TX 75017-1572