

4th QTR 2020

# Mansfield Historical Society

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The Women's Division of the Chamber of Commerce

A women's division of the Mansfield Chamber of Commerce was organized under the driving force of Charlotte Martin. In her interview with a reporter for the *Mansfield News Mirror*, Charlotte told him "the purpose of the organization will be to assist the chamber of commerce in projects such as, the tour of homes, beautification of the community, add playgrounds, and be a welcoming team to all newcomers into our town". On February 26, 1975, at Walnut Creek Country Club, the organizing meeting was held. Twenty-five women were present. Bernice Cox, who owned a flower shop, was elected president. Other officers and committee chairs were: Dorothy Updegraff, Sandra Stolley, Ann Vess, Loretta Pressley, Carol Swafford, Lou Epps, Edna Phillips, Avena Cook, Pat Galloway, Pat Palm, Jean Gibbs, Carol Spencer, Alice Henry, and Virginia Crew. In 1976, the Division participated in a Bicentennial Celebration with a fundraiser including a 1976 Ford Pinto to be auctioned or raffled.....[continued](#)



Pictured below are past presidents who attended the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon at Walnut Creek Country Club. Many returned to be recognized. Left to right (standing) Dee Davey, Mary Beth Anderson, Carol Parrish, Jaquelyn Taylor, DVM, Janet Shupe, (seated) Virginia Brittain and Marilyn Gerloff, president.



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Dee Davey recalls one home tour as being her most memorable one. "The homeowner lived in the Lakeview Estates. The house was awesome, it had a basement, which very few homes had at the time. It had a fully functioning library with the moving ladder, just like in the colleges. We sat out some food in the living area. It had white, white carpet. The punch was cherry. I'm not sure who did it, but a glass of punch was dropped on the carpet." She noted some compensation was made to the homeowners and that ended snacks at future home tours. Dee said the fall tour tickets cost \$3.00 each and one year they made \$900 and were excited."

Dee said, "we moved the fall tour to the Christmas Home Tour in 1992. I was president that year, and we had been trying to get the house belonging to the Brosh family, which was a stately home on Hwy 157. Carol Brosh, at the time, always held an event for Angels with Wings, and that prevented her from hosting. But this year she agreed. That was the year we began selling-tickets for the limos. The regular ticket was \$20 each and the limo ticket was \$25 each. After paying the limo bill, I'm not sure we made much money, but the idea caught on and some women gathered friends and hired their own limos the next year. One of the last Christmas Home Tours made in excess of \$25,000.00."

In 1989, Carol Parrish was the president of the Women's Division. It was expected that the Women's Division members did most of the organizing and planning for the annual Chamber of Commerce auction fundraiser. That year it was held at Marilyn and Jim Helzer's home and equestrian farm on Turner Warnell. A barbeque dinner, silent auction, and live auction were planned. There was always a C & W band. Kenneth and Keith Pressley were the auctioneer team. Everyone looked forward to live auction held at the end of the evening. Someone donated a big gazebo and someone else donated the delivery and set up. Carol had an idea and talked to Lucretia Mills about her "vision". They wanted to buy it for the area by Geyer Field. The annual Hometown Celebration was held at Geyer Field, but it was on MISD property. Somehow they contacted the MISD superintendent who gave them permission, should they win the bid, to place it on MISD property close to Walnut Creek Drive. Carol quickly called an emergency meeting of the Division's board and it was approved. After the gazebo was purchased and delivered, Lucretia and Gary Mills became its caretakers. For many, many years until Lucretia's death, they put up holiday decorations, planted flowers, and painted the gazebo. Keep Mansfield Beautiful Commission supplied flowers and gardeners to help them. For thirty years, Easter photos, Fall, July 4<sup>th</sup>, and Christmas family photos have been taken in the gazebo.

Cheryl Silva, chiropractor, was a very active member of the Women's Division of the Chamber of Commerce. During the 1990s and early 2000's, Cheryl took on the Yard of the Month. She said husbands would actually call her and tell her she needed to select his wife's yard as "Yard of the Month". She chaired the Benevolence Committee several years too. One year, we adopted a family of six, single mom and five boys. Cheryl took on the duty of buying them Back-to-School clothes, Easter dinner and Easter clothes, and Christmas dinner, a tree, and toys. This was done before internet shopping. Later, the Women's Division helped Habitat for Humanity by providing breakfast and lunches for the volunteers and helping with construction.

**Virginia Friedman**, member of Mansfield Historical Society, has many interests. She is a paleontologist and a member of International Amber Association, and amber researcher. Virginia offered to write an article for us on the very oldest history of Mansfield.

### The Geology of Mansfield

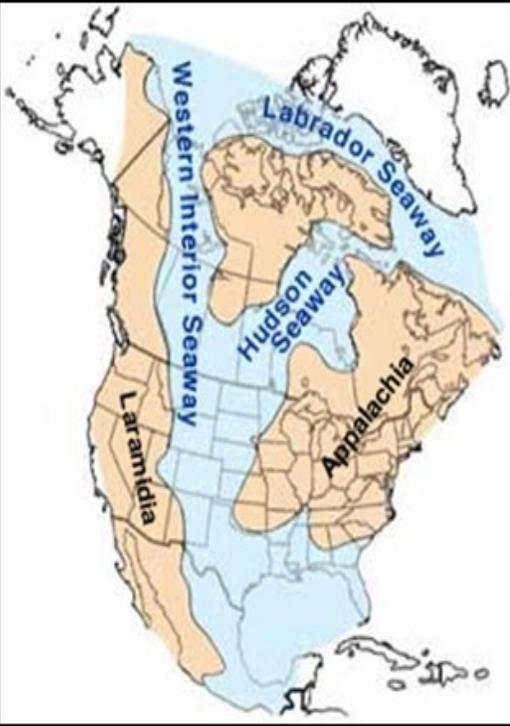
It is empowering to know that the land where we all live today -- what is now the City of Mansfield -- was a long long time ago in geological terms a vast ocean. This body of water was called the Western Interior Seaway. It was what is called an epicontinental seaway and stretched all the way from what is now the Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic Ocean, splitting North America into two landmasses, called Laramidia to the west and Appalachia to the east. (Fig. 1 from Wikipedia Commons)

So a huge area of the United States (including Texas) was submerged under a huge ocean for about 45 million years. This sea experienced several regressions and transgressions. This means that at some point some areas that were previously submerged became temporarily firm land and vice versa. The interior seaway was not very deep (at the most about 200 meters) but it was teeming with life of all sorts. A lot of marine organisms inhabited these waters. We know this because of the vast numbers of fossils that are found in many parts of the DFW Metroplex. Here in Mansfield, the sediments (the upper layer beneath top soil) are Cretaceous in age and are about 90 million years old.

Within the city limits we can find both marine invertebrate and vertebrate animals. Some examples of the former are several kinds of clams, snails and ammonites. Of the latter: reptiles like plesiosaurs (huge marine lizard-like animals with long necks that were the size of a school bus), countless fishes (some were very big), sharks, turtles, as well as enigmatic small marine lizard-like animals called *Coniasarus*. There is even a report of a dinosaur that lived on nearby land but most likely fell into the water of this seaway and drowned. His remains have also been found within Mansfield's boundaries along with the remains of a new to science flying reptile, a pterosaur. These remains are generally found scattered, rarely are they life-like or articulated. It is very common to find just pieces here and there like teeth and vertebrae. The reason for this is that the skeletons of those organisms are composed of hard durable minerals that are able to survive the geologic ages. Some of these fossils are big and they are very beautiful.

For an organism to be found as a fossil several things have to happen. First, upon death, the organism must be buried or covered quickly with fine sediments (sand, mud, silt) that protect it from mechanical destruction. This burial by fine sediments needs to take place also relatively quickly to avoid decomposition by scavengers or by bacteria, fungi and other microorganisms that would work fast on a body destroying it. So, if a fish, shark, plesiosaur, turtle, clam, ammonite or even microscopic floating organisms would die and then sink to the bottom of the sea and be quickly buried by fine sediments, its chances of fossilization would become greater. Through millions of years and layer after layer of more sediments and through compaction it can become a fossil.

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Millions of years later by the end of the Cretaceous, the Western Interior Seaway disappeared (dried up) and the land was eventually uplifted by tectonic movements. This is where we live now. In our modern day lives there are new construction sites, be it new housing or apartment developments, new shopping centers, highway expansions, new bridges, or railroad cuts. Where the old sediments are found in an outcrop, the fossil hunter can find his/her treasures.

Next time, we will talk about these unique and exciting finds that have made a contribution to the science of paleontology right here in Mansfield!

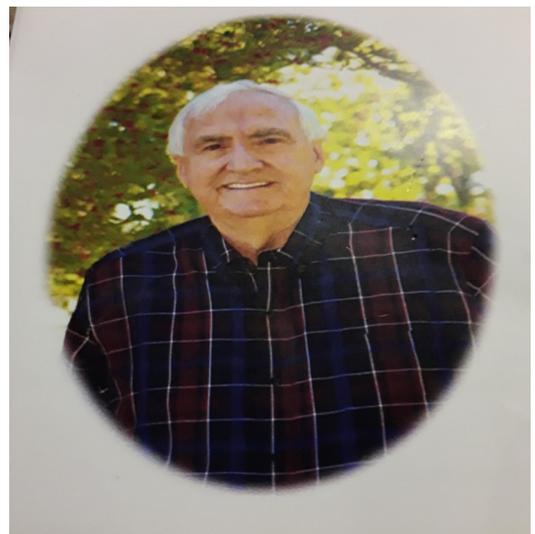
Virginia Friedman, Paleontologist

Volunteers are needed to help with tours at the Man House. Period clothing may be worn, crafts, pioneer living will be a part of special tours. Tours will be open to school children, scouting troupes, seniors, etc.

Wes Seeton

Wilbert Wesley Seeton passed on October 2, 2020 in Mansfield. He was born in Mansfield on August 21, 1939 to parents, Wilbert and Ruby Seeton. Wes had a sister, Elizabeth, and one brother, Charles. He graduated from Mansfield High School in 1957. He farmed his father's farm and worked for Southwestern Bell for 30 years. On December 5, 1959, he married Linda Galloway, also from Mansfield.

Wes was a member of Mansfield Church of Christ, a volunteer fireman, an ambulance driver, and a Jaycee (Junior Chamber of Commerce). During his time as a Jaycee, Geyer Field was built for youth baseball. He served on Planning and Zoning Board and city council. Wes had a daughter, Stacy David, and son, Scott Seeton, many grandchildren, a great granddaughter, nephews, and nieces. Wes and Linda Seeton are Lifetime members of Mansfield Historical Society.



Provided by Blessing Funeral

### Letter from the president, Johnny Bratton

Hello. Another three months has passed since our last newsletter. It looks like the administering of the vaccine is well on the way. As you know, by position of being the Mansfield Historical Society, I also sit on the Mansfield Historic Preservation Board. Our first meeting will be via ZOOM on January 28<sup>th</sup>. The first docent training will begin January 28<sup>th</sup> through March.

In future newsletters, I will be sharing a piece of history many of you have never heard before. Prior to 1972, Mansfield did not have mail delivery to homes. Only rural residents had that privilege. All residents living in downtown and surrounding streets could only receive mail in a post office box. The box was rented for a small fee per month. In 1972, Charlie Joe Nichols, the postmaster, hired Mansfield's first city carrier, yours

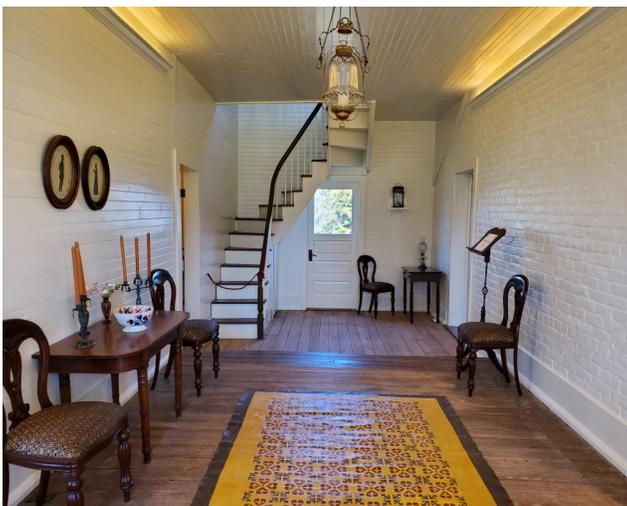
### Man House Museum update by Jessica Baber, Museum Manager

The Man House Museum is officially open. After years of planning and months of restoration, the house is complete and open to visitors. The hours are Friday and Saturday 10am-4pm.

We are looking for volunteers! If you are interested in becoming one of our docents who lead tours of the home, or to help out at our special events, please contact me at [jessica.baber@mansfieldtexas.gov](mailto:jessica.baber@mansfieldtexas.gov) or call the museum at 817-473-4250 to find out more information about how to get involved.

Right is the log cabin room. All of the furniture is period, some pieces were made in Texas. Bottom, left, is the foyer, aka "dog trot". The staircase is original. A piece of furniture was donated by Mary Scot Brucks. Bottom, right, is the parlor. The mantle is original, made by Ralph Man. The rocker with cane back, doll sitting, was purchased by Ralph Man for his wife.

604 West Broad Street



**Mansfield Historical Society**

Open: 10am -4pm Tues-Sat

**102 N. Main Street**

Mezzanine level

**Mansfield, TX 76063**

