

GRAPEVINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# On The Vine

DEDICATED TO PRESERVING GRAPEVINE HISTORY

## Christmas at the Museum and Torian Cabin

Plan to visit the Grapevine Historical Museum over the Holidays with family and friends to celebrate Christmas on the Grape Vine Prairie. Seasonal exhibits include traditions from the 1800s to the 1950s and includes photographs of some of our members enjoying snow in years past. There is also a new doll display adjacent to the attic and a nativity scene from Italy in the parlor.

Special thanks to Joe Ann Standlee, Lisa LeJune, Helen Jean Lucas Reed and Keith Uselton for cleaning and decorating the museum; and to Debi Meek, John Boyd and Debbie Reynolds (pictured below) for decorating the inside of the Torian Cabin this year. Your time and talent is what helps make Grapevine great all year long.

Janis Robinson



*Happy New Year*  
**2020**

## Happy New Year A Message From Our President

It's hard to believe it's 2020 - it only seems like yesterday we were all in a panic over what was going to happen at 12:01 on January 1, 2000. The good news is we all survived it and we have 20 more years of Grapevine history to celebrate since then! It is my honor and privilege to serve as President of the Grapevine Historical Society. We now boast over 230 members and 28 business members and we're growing each month. I want to extend a warm welcome to all our new members.



Reflecting on 2019, it was a busy year for our Society. We had a chilly but inspiring and informative celebration last March 2 in honor of Texas Independence Day as well as the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Grapevine featuring our own Mayor William D. Tate and "Gen. Sam Houston." Our Museum looks better than ever under the leadership of Curator Janis Roberson. In 2019 we hosted thousands of visitors from all over the world as we shared the history and culture of our beloved city. We inducted two new Lifetime Members, Thomas Wall (Tommy) Simmons and Paul W. McCallum at our annual banquet in November. We are excited about the prospect of great programs at our meetings on the fourth Monday of each month in the coming year. We hope you'll join us and learn more about area history and many of the "characters" who made Grapevine the interesting and amazing city it is.

Whether you've been in Grapevine for five generations, five years or only five months, you should be a member of the Grapevine Historical Society. We are all ambassadors for our town and the more you know about our history, the more you will be able to share our story with visiting family, friends or people you haven't met yet. The history we are making today will be what people are talking about in years to come.

Hope to see you at our meeting on January 27.

Duff O'Dell, President



## January Program

### Grapevine's Professional Baseball Players

#### January Events:

Grapevine Historical Society meetings will resume on January 27 at 7:00 pm at the Grapevine Public Library. Our monthly meetings are on the 4th Monday. Meetings are open to the public and refreshments will be served.

#### Museum Hours:

Tue-Sat: 10:00 am - 4:00 pm  
 Sunday: 11:00 am - 4:00 pm  
 Closed Mondays

#### Thanks to Our 2019 Newsletter Contributors

Sallie Andrews, Aislyn Gaddis, Patricia Clarissimeaux, Alysia Broadfield, Zoë Gehler, Randy Barton, Deon T. Standlee and Mark Terpening.  
*John Boyd, Editor*

#### GHS 2020

#### Executive Board

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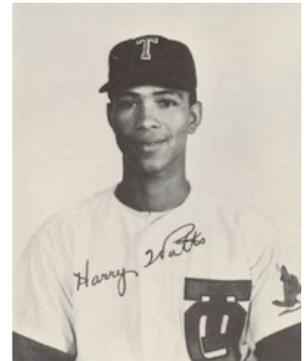
**John Boyd:**

Publicity Chairman

When Jackie Robinson became the first African American to play Major League Baseball in 1947, he created opportunities for others to follow in his footsteps. Three young men from Grapevine attended Turner Elementary School, which had a sandlot that allowed them to develop their baseball skills in that still segregated part of Grapevine, and they went on to attend I.M. Terrell High School, located in Fort Worth. The school opened in 1882 as the city's first black school during the era of formal racial segregation in the United States, and though they endured a forty-two minute round trip to and from school each day, they continued to hone their baseball skills. Despite the hardships they had to overcome, they persevered. Harry Watts played for the St. Louis Cardinals from 1958-1966, Billy Wayne Chambers for the San Francisco Giants from 1963-1965, and Jerry Ray Ennis for the San Francisco Giants from 1964-1965.

Please join us at 7:00 pm on January 27th for a panel discussion with our players moderated by Bob Ray Sanders, a former columnist for the Star-Telegram. Our meetings are held at the Grapevine Public Library and refreshments will be served. Meetings are always free and open to the public so please feel free to spread the word.

Alysia Broadfield



Harry Watts

### Grapevine 100 Years Ago: Advertisements from the 1920 Grapevine Sun



## Who is Santa Claus and How Did He Get Invited to Christmas?



Saint Nicholas of Myra  
315 AD

Saint Nicholas of Myra was born about 280 AD in the Eastern Mediterranean or what is now Demre, Turkey. His wealthy parents died at a young age and Nicholas inherited significant wealth. The young Nicholas was raised by his uncle, who encouraged Nicholas to become a priest.

Priest Nicholas moved to the Beit-Jala area of Bethlehem from 312 to 315 where he lived in a cave and studied scriptures. After his death, the *Saint Nicholas Monastery* was built above this cave and became Bethlehem's oldest active church until it was destroyed in 1920. If you visit this site today you will receive an icon card that shows St. Nicholas in a red hat, red robe, and a white beard - a very traditional look for a Bishop of that era. In 320 Emperor Diocletian persecuted Christians and Nicholas was imprisoned and tortured. When Constantine ruled as the first Christian Emperor - Nicholas was freed.

The Nicene Creed was signed at the First Nicea Council called by Constantine in 325; several documents show that Bishop Nicholas attended.

Because of all the legends and miracles attributed to St. Nicholas, he is considered the patron saint of sailors, women and children. During his adult life, he spent much of his time giving his inherited wealth to the needy, especially women and children. Nicholas died on December 6, 343 AD and was buried in Myra at the "*Saint Nicholas Temple*". Following his death, he became one of the most popular Christian Saints, especially in Russian, Greek and Latin cultures. Nicholas was third, only behind Jesus and Mary, in Christian Medieval art depictions. For many centuries the December 6 Saint Nicholas gift-giving festival was the most popular Christian holiday.

Turkey has always been and continues to be a crossroads between Muslim and Christian cultures. By 1087 the Muslims were clearly in control and Italian Christians were worried about the safety of the St. Nicholas temple where his bones were kept. They secretly stole the bones and moved them to Bari, Italy where the *Basilica di San Nicola* was built in his honor. (Some of his bones also found their way to the *San Nicoló Church* in Venice, but that's another story.) After this relocation Saint Nicholas became very popular in western society.

But how did St. Nicholas become Santa Claus? When Martin Luther (1483–1546) rose to power, the center of Protestant Christianity moved to Germany and Luther suppressed the importance of all Saints, especially St. Nicholas. Martin Luther was disturbed by the fact that Jewish celebrations, Pagan holidays, and the St. Nicholas festival took away from the importance of Christmas and the celebration of the birth of Jesus. Martin Luther declared that the Christ Child was the source of all gifts, not St. Nicholas. But it was hard to overcome a 1000-year history of celebrating St. Nicholas as a popular December Christian festival.

The Germans pronounce Saint Nicholas as *Sinter Klaus*, which became *Santa Claus* in English. Christ Child is *Kris Kindle* in German and "*Chris Kringle*" became a popular English nickname for Santa Claus. While Martin Luther's intention was to suppress St. Nicholas, the end result was that Saint Nicholas, Sinter Klaus and Santa Claus ended up becoming Christmas guests. As we trace the history, appearance and name of Saint Nicholas throughout his multi-cultural history, it is easy to see how Santa became a part of the world's most famous birthday.



Sinter Klaus, Germany, 1500 AD



Modern Day American Santa Claus, 2000 AD

John Boyd