

**CITY OF TYLER
CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION**



Agenda Number:

Date: August 27, 2008

Subject: Request that the City Council consider designating Tyler Woman's Building as a Half Mile of History recipient.

Page: 1 of 2

Item Reference: Half Mile of History Preservation Program

The Half Mile of History is a cultural and historic landmark program paying tribute to people, places and events that have contributed to the City of Tyler and/or Smith County. The Half Mile of History is a permanent, outdoor walk-around loop that covers an approximate one-half mile stretch of sidewalk surrounding the square in the heart of downtown Tyler. People, places and events chosen for the Half Mile of History are honored with a commemorative plaque placed in the sidewalk.

One of the responsibilities of the Tyler Historical Preservation Board is to recommend people, places and events to be included in the Half Mile of History Preservation Program. On August 6, 2008, the Tyler Historical Preservation Board voted unanimously to recommend Tyler Woman's Building for inclusion in the Half Mile of History Preservation Program. A brief narrative follows.

The Woman's Building located at 911 South Broadway in Tyler was completed in 1932. Various charitable, social and educational women's groups met in the homes of prominent Tyler citizens during the 1920's. Several Tyler women at the time had an ambitious dream to provide a community building to address the needs of these growing groups. In 1931, Judge and Mrs. Sam Lindsey donated the large wooded lot on South Broadway to the clubwomen. The building was completed on June 13, 1932. The landscaping for the grounds was completed by donations and volunteers under the direction of Mrs. W.S. Hanley.

The Tyler Woman's Building has contributed to the community of Tyler in many ways. During World War II the building served as a meeting place to roll bandages and to sell war bonds, and the third floor was converted into apartments for use by soldiers and their families. In the fifties, the building was used as a place to educate young women in the fine art of etiquette and manners. During the annual Tyler Azalea Trails, the building's gardens are highlighted as a "must see". In years past the Texas Rose Festival has used the building for some of its formal functions.

The Tyler Woman's Building has been the civic and social gathering place for all of Tyler's citizenry for more than seventy-five years.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Tyler Historical Preservation Board recommends by a vote of 8-0 that the City Council designate Tyler Woman's Building as a Half Mile of History recipient.

Barbara Holly

Drafted/Recommended By: Barbara Holly
Department Leader

Edited/Submitted By:

Approved by HP 8-0



NOMINATION FORM HALF MILE OF HISTORY

Section A: Nomination Information

Name of Nominated person, place or event: TYLER WOMAN'S BUILDING
911 So. Broadway

The nominee is being honored for outstanding contributions in the area(s) of (please check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government/Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arts and Culture	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Aviation	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention/Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/> Sports
<input type="checkbox"/> Business/Corporate Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> Law	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Oil/Gas	

Section B: Nominator's Information

Name of person making nomination: PAT PILGRIM

Address: 14964 CR 475

City: Lindale State: TX Zip: 75771

Daytime telephone: 903-881-0138 Email: cwp5@suddenlink.net

Relationship to nominated individual:
Past President/Tyler Woman's Forum; Past President of Tyler Woman's Bldg, Inc.

Nominated Individual's year of death: Na

Section C: Narrative

The narrative section of the application is the most important. It is the primary source of information judges use to make their selection of new inductees. Two (2) typed pages of 12-point type is the maximum acceptable length of the narrative. Any additional material will be referred to only for verification of accuracy of the nomination. No submitted materials will be returned.

The narrative section must contain an explanation of the nominee's enduring contribution that make this person/place/event worthy of the honor. Please describe the impact the nominee has had on the community, county, region, nation and/or world. For Individuals, please include any honors earned by the nominee as well as a list of organizations in which the nominee has been involved. Also, please indicate their educational background as well as the length of time the individual has lived in Smith County. Inclusion of photos is preferred but optional. Do not send original photos. All submitted materials will become property of the City of Tyler and its Historical Preservation Board.

Please submit nominations to:
City of Tyler Historical Preservation Board
Attention: Half Mile of History
P.O. Box 2039
Tyler, Texas 75710

RECEIVED
JUL 08 2008
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Tyler Landmark
1985

THE TYLER WOMAN'S BUILDING AN ENDURING LEGACY

The Woman's Building in Tyler, Texas was completed in 1932. Today after over 75 years of continuous service, the building is viewed as an elegant landmark in the historic "Azalea District" of our beautiful city.

Once just the ambitious dreams of local women, such as Mrs. Alex Woldert, Mrs. Gus Pinkerton, Mrs. W. C. Windsor and Mrs. Robert Spence, the building was an outgrowth of the women's club movement of the 1920's. Various charitable, social and educational women's groups met in the homes of prominent Tyler citizens during this era. As the women's ambitions grew they could foresee the need for a community building in Tyler serving as a place to showcase local and national talent, to provide meeting rooms for city organizations and to serve Tyler by providing a central recognized facility for the citizens.

The campaign to erect the building began on June 16, 1928 with the charter of the Tyler Woman's Building Association. This organization would evolve into the Tyler Woman's Forum following completion of the building. In meeting the financial needs of such an endeavor, several hundred dollars were given by the trustees of a fund raised from the sale of war savings stamps and liberty loan funds during WWI that had been left in Tyler banks. In the evenings, Mrs. Woldert and Mrs. Windsor walked through the various neighborhoods, knocking door-to-door to solicit funds!

On July 17, 1931 Judge and Mrs. Sam A. Lindsey donated the large wooded lot on South Broadway to the clubwomen to be used as the location of the building. The cornerstone was set April 17, 1932. Construction was completed on June 13, 1932 at a cost of \$32,243.00. As an interesting note, when the roof needed repairs in the 1990's, the cost of replacing the felt and broken tiles came to about \$32,000! Local home demonstration clubs, with the aid of local farmers who brought in wagonloads of native rock, landscaped the grounds under the direction of Mrs. W. S. Hanley.

A formal opening of the building was held at 8:00 P.M. on October 4, 1932. Announcement of the opening was included in the *Dallas Morning News* and a reporter was sent to cover the event. The evening was highlighted by the performance of the Tyler Municipal Band, under the direction of Professor J. F. Witte, a former member of John Phillip Sousa's famous military orchestra. "Doc Witte" as he was known locally, composed a special piece of music for the occasion entitled "The Triumphal March."

The building was described in the first yearbook as "providing a lounge, dining room seating three hundred, a library, an auditorium seating five hundred with a commodious stage where the Tyler Little Theatre will have its presentations hereafter, smoking dens for the men, powder room for the ladies, apartments for the caretakers, and available space for thirteen clubs to meet at the same time."

The overall structure has not changed over the years. Built in the Federal Style with graceful columns and red tile roof, the building has been lovingly managed by a plethora of devoted women and men who have determined that the building will continue to stand as a monument to the determined efforts of its farsighted founders.

In order to continue to meet the demands for maintenance and repairs, the Tyler Woman's Forum Board of Directors recognized the need to establish a tax-deductible entity, which would better provide an incentive for foundations and philanthropic

individuals to donate large financial maintenance gifts. In 1996 the Tyler Woman's Building, Inc. was chartered and ownership of the building passed to the new TWB's Board of Directors. Charter President was Mrs. Dean (Millie) Hudson.

The Tyler Woman's Building is a national treasure that has been recognized as a Tyler Historic Landmark, a recorded Texas State Historic Landmark and a part of the National Register of Historic Neighborhoods. Among the notables who have graced the stage of the building are Bennett Cerf, Tullulah Bankhead, Jean Dixon and Basil Rathbone. However, many a young Tyler citizen also performed on that same stage for family and friends during piano or dance recitals. The building served as the launching pad for the Tyler Civic Theatre and the East Texas Symphony Orchestra.

During World War II this landmark served a crucial role in the war efforts. The building was used as a meeting place to roll bandages, to collect metal and to sell war bonds. Programs were given on growing "victory gardens" and on the progress of the war. The third floor was converted into apartments for use by soldiers and their families while the soldier was on leave. An interesting fact is that the women bought a wedding gown, pearls and nylon stockings and sent these items to England to be used by war brides for a rental fee of one dollar.

In the fifties, the Forum adopted a strategy to educate young women in the fine art of etiquette and manners. A dozen female students from a nearby junior high school were accepted into a monthly class, meeting after school at the building. These lucky girls were instructed on the fine art of how to stand in a receiving line, how to properly wear hats and gloves, how to pour punch and how to write thank you notes, condolences and other correspondence. The auditorium had removable seats then, so many proms from local and area schools were held there. Chaperones were seated in the balcony to oversee the activities. If a hapless student "danced" his date to the security of the space under the balcony for a private moment, the chaperone would be there shortly on the auditorium floor to return the couple to the crowd of dancers.

The annual Tyler Azalea Trails highlight the building's gardens as a "must see" for tourists from all over the world. The gardens are graced with memorial statuary and fountains, trellis and trees given in honor or memory of various loved ones by family members. The Tyler Woman's Forum maintains the grounds assisted by the donated services of a local landscape engineer.

From formal functions such as The Texas Rose Festival activities, to family events such as weddings and anniversaries, to educational programs such as medical seminars and historic presentations, to afternoon tea parties and men's club luncheons, the Tyler Woman's Building has been the civic and social gathering place for all of Tyler's citizenry for more than seventy-five years.

Throughout the years, the Tyler Woman's Building stands as a visible reminder of what can be achieved through the determination of a few people working together. The building has impacted innumerable Tyler families and is a recognizable landmark along South Broadway. Generations of caregivers have held to the standard of the founders, "equal courtesy to all." Recognition of the Tyler Woman's Building by the "Half Mile of History" program would serve to ensure the rich history of this "grand dame" would not be forgotten.

Parley

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There were recorded as the results already obtained. Acceptance of the principle of abolishing all "bombardment from the air. Elimination of heavy mobile land artillery and the substitution of tanks, prohibitions of chemical, bacteriological and incendiary warfare and the establishment of an international commission to supervise execution of the disarmament convention.

Looking ahead, the conference declared that the reduction of armaments, the limitation of arms budgets, the curtailment of armaments, and naval restrictions should form the basis of examination during the process by special commissions of the conference or by representatives representing the interested powers.

Experts of the great naval powers are expected to meet in London in August to begin discussions leading to further cuts in sea armaments according to the American or the British scheme. The Conference Bureau, which is the working agency, will meet Aug. 21.

Part of the American delegation to the parley plans to call for issue on the Lovatshin, July 21.

The vote on the adjournment declaration was 4 to 2, with eight abstentions. In announcing his negative vote, Count Bludnow, ambassador of Germany, said he strongly favored President Hoover's proposals for a general convention but not in arms.

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Tyler's New \$30,000 Women's Building Opened



money to go on the building fund. W. H. D. Clark with the aid of leading lawyers helped women heads of families vote for the day for beautification of the grounds.

Mrs. Alvin Waddell, Jr., president of the Woman's Building Association and general chairman of the house, Mrs. J. W. Smiley is treasurer. Mrs. Stan J. Greer was chairman of the finance committee, Mrs. R. L. Pigg chairman of the building committee, Mrs. W. S. Hamley secretary and chairman of the housekeeping committee, Mrs. A. F. Stodley chairman of the committee drawing up the house rules, Mrs. Delaney, wife chairman of the subcommittee, Mrs. J. W. Hamley, Mrs. C. E. Kato, chairman of the house committee, Mrs. Ernest S. Hamley is president of Tyler Women's Forum and Mrs. John M. Bunker, chairman of the house furniture.

Robert T. Hill Relates of Colonist and Scientist Who Crossed Texas About 1528

Special to the News.

TYLER, Texas, July 23.—Tyler's new \$30,000 Women's Building has been completed, and the lounge and dining room recently thrown open to the public.

The handsome new building, equipped to the best of its kind in the Southwest, is the fulfillment of a dream cherished by Tyler citizens for many years and which has been in movement since before 1928 when the Tyler Women's Building Association was chartered. The building also satisfies Tyler's long-felt need of a municipal auditorium as such an assembly place seating 500 is the new Women's Building where the Tyler Little Theater will give its presentations hereafter. Included in the building are a lounge, library, a ball room seating 300, available room for their bodies and before the curtain could be stopped had disappeared in the tangled brush and rocks. Even the rhyolites have indicated that it is unsafe to warn themselves in what used to be their favorite haunts of evenings when there was a slight chill in the air, right in the middle of the line where fine sand and dust had soaked up heat from the sun. Ranchmen who discussed the prepossence of

for thirteen chairs for public meetings on the same day, the former speaking for the men.

When the women's building was opened in 1928, Tyler women were amazed for their proposed clubhouse, but the attempt was far from being successful until on July 10, 1932, when Mrs. Joan A. Lapcey of Tyler gave the women of Tyler and South County a lot of the principle of the building, stipulation that the building be constructed within a year, and that the structure be for the use of the women and give testimony of all the women in Tyler and South County. The women started to work on their own about a year by the day they driven because a reality.

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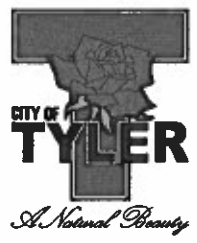
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10/28
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**NOMINATION FORM
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Elmayer

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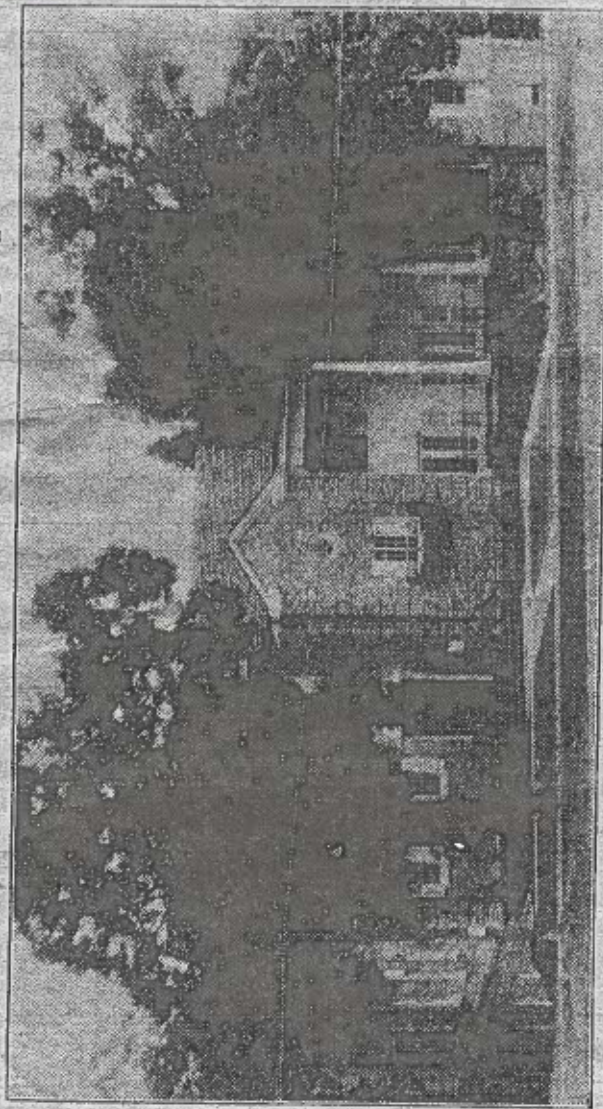
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Tyler's New \$30,000 Women's Building Opened



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Parley

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These were recorded as the results already attained: Acceptance of the principle of abolishing all bombardment from the air, limitation of heavy mobile land artillery and the unit tonnage of tanks, prohibition of chemical, bacteriological and incendiary warfare and the establishment of an international commission to supervise execution of the disarmament convention.

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Part of the American delegation to the parley plans to sail for home on the Leviathan, July 31.

The vote on the adjournment declaration was 41 to 2, with eight abstaining. In announcing his negative vote, Count Rudolph Nadolny of Germany, said he strongly favored President Hoover's proposals for a general one-third cut in arms.

Senator Cope Durals of Bolivia, in voting yes, said that aggression by Paraguay is now disturbing peace of South America, but he hoped that when the conference meets again all the South American representatives would be able to gather in Geneva in complete harmony.

China Doesn't Vote.

Dr. W. W. Yen, China's spokesman, abstained from voting, saying his Nation could give no pledge of disarmament until the Sino-Japanese conflict has been settled in accordance with the principles of the League of Nations. The other abstentions

money to go on the building fund. W. H. D. Clubs with the aid of lending farmers hauled wagon loads of native rock to the city for beautification of the grounds.

Mrs. Alex. Woldert Sr. is president of the Woman's Building Association and general chairman of the house, Mrs. J. W. Smiley is treasurer, Mrs. Sam R. Greer was chairman of the finance committee, Mrs. R. L. Page chairman of the building committee, Mrs. W. S. Hanley secretary and chairman of the landscaping committee, and Mrs. A. F. Sledge chairman of the committee drawing up the house rules. Mrs. Dabney White chairman of the entertainment committee, and Mrs. Cress Eaton chairman of the house committee. Mrs. Ernest S. Stevens is president of Tyler Women's Forum and Mrs. John M. Burke, chairman of the house furniture.

for thirteen clubs to hold meetings on the same day, rest rooms, smoking den for men, powder rooms for women, resident hostess' apartments. Since 1928, Tyler women have managed in numerous ways to raise money for their proposed clubhouse, but the amount was far from being enough when on July 16, 1931, Judge and Mrs. Sam A. Lindsey of Tyler and Smith County women of Tyler and Smith County a lot on the principal street with the stipulation that the building be completed within a year and that the structure be for the educational, recreational and civic betterment of all the women in Tyler and Smith County. The women started to work at once and almost a year to the day their dream became a reality.

Members of Smith County Women's Home Demonstration clubs contributed their canned goods for sale, the

Robert T. Hill Relates of Colonist and Scientist Who Crossed Texas About 1528

Painting by ...

Bernadette Spitz

From: Bernadette Spitz
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2008 9:32 AM
To: 'cwp5@suddenlink.net'
Subject: Tyler Women's Building

8/26/08 @ 10:30 am

Pat:

I was hoping that you could review the language (see below) that is proposed for the inscription on the stone/plaque for the Half Mile of History. Please let me know if you have any changes or suggestions. The area for the inscription only allows for approximately 30 words. Thanks for your help. Bernadette

WOMAN'S per Pat Pelgrum

TYLER WOMEN'S BUILDING

Located at 911 S. Broadway, this building provided the launching pad for the Tyler Civic Theatre and East Texas Symphony Orchestra. Built in 1932, it became a civic and social gathering place for the Tyler community.

Bernadette Spitz
Senior Planner, Historic Preservation Officer
City of Tyler
903.531.1173
bspitz@tylertexas.com



BUILDING: FRONT VIEW



BUILDING : SIDE VIEW (NORTH)



BUILDING : SOUTH SIDE VIEW