

Daniel Memorial Orphanage (2010)

Marker #: 16594

Marker Text:

DANIEL MEMORIAL ORPHANAGE

PROMINENT BUSINESSMAN AND LIFELONG FREESTONE COUNTY RESIDENT JENNINGS BRYAN DANIEL (1896-1977), ALONG WITH HIS FAMILY, CREATED A FACILITY EAST OF FAIRFIELD FOR HOMELESS AND UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN, WHERE BOTH THEIR PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL NEEDS COULD BE MET. DANIEL PLANNED THE FACILITY ON A 1,140-ACRE TRACT WHICH CONTAINED SCENIC HILLS, VALLEYS AND MEADOWS AND WAS BISECTED BY TWO RUNNING CREEKS. A CHARTER WAS GRANTED BY THE STATE OF TEXAS FOR DANIEL MEMORIAL ORPHANAGE IN SEPTEMBER 1947. DANIEL PURCHASED FORMER BARRACKS FROM NEARBY CAMP FANNIN TO SERVE AS DORMITORIES AND DINING AND ADMINISTRATIVE SPACE, AND AN ARMY CHAPEL IN OKLAHOMA WAS LATER ACQUIRED AND REASSEMBLED AT THE SITE. ALTHOUGH THE HOME DID NOT OFFICIALLY OPEN UNTIL NOVEMBER 1948, THE DANIEL FAMILY GENEROUSLY ACCEPTED A FEW CHILDREN INTO THEIR HOME IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ORPHANAGE'S COMPLETION. THE HOME FLOURISHED, AND BY ITS SECOND ANNIVERSARY IN 1950, THERE WERE 65 RESIDENTS. TWO MANDATORY POLICIES REQUIRED BY J.B. DANIEL INCLUDED REGULAR CHURCH ATTENDANCE BY THE CHILDREN, AND A NON-ADOPTION POLICY TO PREVENT THE SEPARATION OF SIBLINGS. ALTHOUGH THE CHILDREN WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR CHORES SUCH AS TENDING LIVESTOCK, MOWING THE GROUNDS, AND HELPING IN THE KITCHEN, THEY HAD PLENTY OF TIME FOR ACTIVITIES LIKE SWIMMING, BASEBALL AND SUMMER CAMPS; THE CHILDREN ALSO ATTENDED THE FAIRFIELD SCHOOLS. THE DANIEL FAMILY CONTINUED ADMINISTRATION OF THE HOME UNTIL 1968, WHEN J.B. DANIEL RESIGNED HIS BOARD PRESIDENCY DUE TO FAILING HEALTH. THE ENTIRE FACILITY WAS DEEDED TO THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD IN 1970, AND CONTINUES IN OPERATION TODAY AS THE PLEASANT HILL CHILDREN'S HOME. (2010)

Directions: 17 miles east of Fairfield on Hwy 84, on the north side of the Hwy.

Address: 170 Private Rd 292, Oakwood, TX 75855

GPS: N 31° 39.499 W 095° 53.721

PHOTOS: By Linda Mullen on March 1, 2023



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MARKER IS PROPERTY OF THE STATE OF TEXAS