

MEADOWBROOK PARK

ARLINGTON'S FIRST PARK



Jo Alice Wolfe lounges beside Meadowbrook Park swimming pool on June 27, 1956.
- Photo courtesy, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Arlington's first city park, consisting of 52 acres, was purchased by the City of Arlington for \$5,000 in 1923.

The Arlington Rotary Club sponsored the park and it officially opened in 1924 with picnic grounds and a nine-hole golf course. Meadowbrook Park was also the site for Arlington's first outdoor pool, which served the community for more than six decades until the late 1980s.

The 1930s saw the addition of a small woodbine sandstone structure that served as a monkey house. During this period, the Arlington Garden Club entered a national contest for a municipal rose garden. The city set aside two acres in the northwest section of the park for the garden. In February 1933, the garden was awarded a \$1,000 prize for landscaping.

The 1940s saw the installation of a regulation ball field where the recreation center is currently located. The field was home of the highly regarded Vandergriff teams of the 1940s and 50s. Donkey baseball was another activity enjoyed by Arlington dignitaries and local residents. In 1949, lights were added to the ball fields, courtesy of W.T. Vandergriff.

A miniature golf course, located on the east bank of Johnson Creek, was opened in the 1940s where cartoons were shown to neighborhood children on summer evenings. A surplus military barracks was moved to the park and used for many years as the Girl Scouts Little House.

James Daniel Cooper, for whom Cooper Street was named, built a Greek Revival, Georgian-influenced, residence in 1878 at the southeast corner of what is now Cooper and Abram Street. The home was donated to the city by Mr. and Mrs. H.D. Cooper in 1952 and relocated to Meadowbrook Park on the west bank of Johnson Creek. The Cooper House was the public library until 1962, at which time it was leased to the Arlington Woman's Club. The house was designated a Texas Historical Landmark in 1965. The Woman's Club refurbished and maintained the lovely home until it was destroyed by an accidental fire on Halloween in 1998.

Meadowbrook Recreation Center was built in 1963 as the City of Arlington's first indoor recreation center. It has served the community since that time for countless community events and programs.

Inscription by Geraldine Nash Mills, Arlington Historical Society



Baseball field where Vandergriff teams played in the 40s and 50s.



A place to gather for concerts and plays were at the open air theater.
- Postcard courtesy of Fielder House Museum



Home of James Daniel Cooper



Near Completion - Construction is reaching final stages at the Arlington Recreation Center in Meadowbrook Park. J.J. Thomas Construction Company of Fort Worth is general contractor and Jarvis, Putty & Jarvis of Dallas are Architects for the facility. Noted in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, June 29, 1963. Photo courtesy, Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections, UTA Library, Arlington, Texas.

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These prominent businessmen were also avid golfers at the Meadowbrook Golf Course in 1932. From left to right: Ben Spruance, Colonel Irons, Chester Ditto, Clayton Ditto, Mike Ditto, and Francis Harvey.

Photograph courtesy of J.W. Dunlop.
Arlington - A Pictorial History by Arista Joyner & Rene' Harris



In June 1954, the women have their share of fun and becoming avid golfers. Above, left to right - Margeret Thompson and Beth Rider looking on as an unidentified golfer puts.

Photograph courtesy of University of Texas at Arlington