

## ***2009 Dallas, Texas Tour Report***

**Submitted by Ramona Alford Darden, AAFA #0715, Member AAFA Hall of Fame**

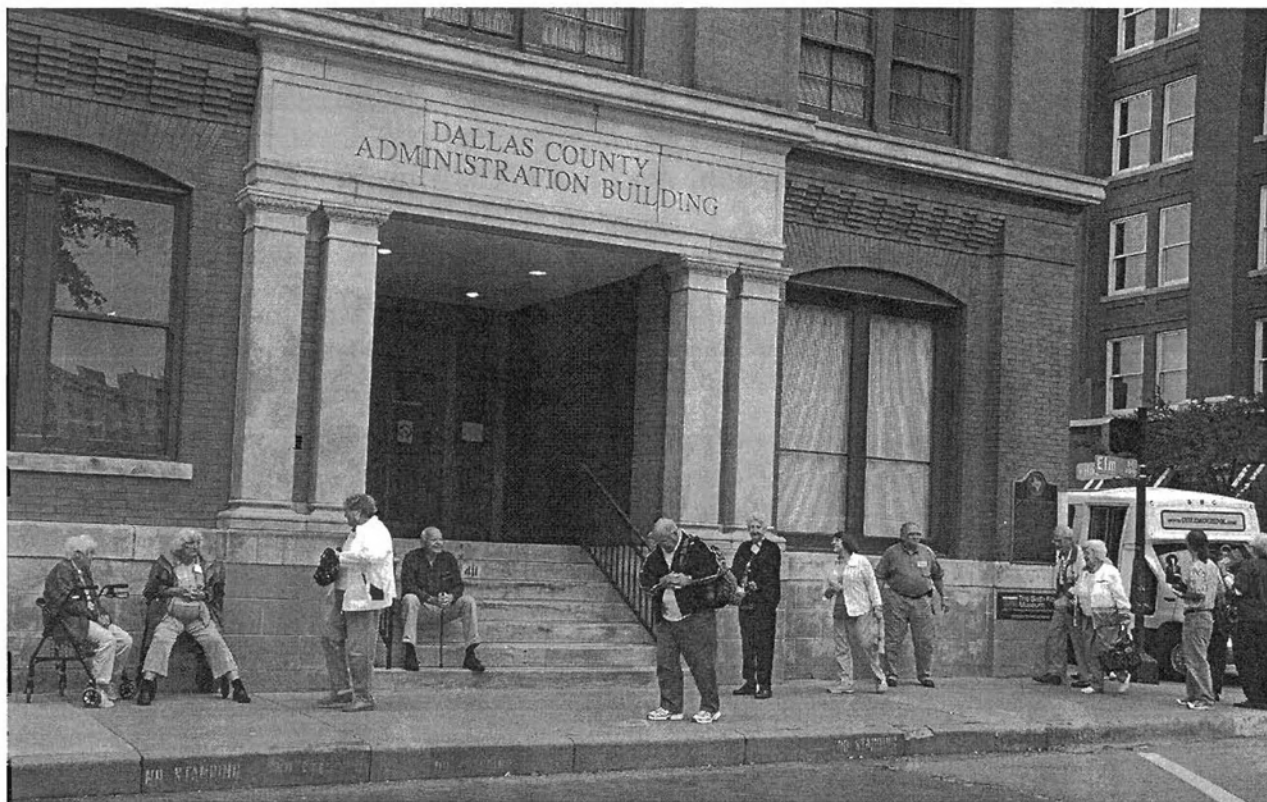
There were 23 members who arrived early for tours. We began early Wednesday morning with our day planned to see Dallas History, Memorials, & Museums. Our first stop was the John F. Kennedy Memorial and Founders Plaza.



**The group is shown inside the Kennedy Memorial. They are: Don Alford, Deloris and Jim Bitting, Earl and Pauline Alford, Doris Vetri, Janet Hemby, Janice Smith, Vesta Bowden, Lynn and Jim Shelley, Walt Smith, Evelyn Mistich, Helen Steele, Joan Alford, Joana Breeland, Pat Smith, Ramona Darden and Bob Steele.**

We continued to the Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza where the life, death and legacy of President John F. Kennedy are chronicled at the site of his assassination. As we toured the Museum, we saw photos, watched news footage and heard audio commentary from some of those closest to Kennedy as well as from eyewitnesses to the assassination. We gained a sense of the political climate in Texas and the reasons why Kennedy was visiting on Nov. 22, 1963. More memorably, and perhaps morbidly, you can gaze at the view from the sixth floor of the former Texas School Book Depository at Dealey Plaza and recreate the path the President's motorcade followed then examine information about the official investigations into the assassination, including the Warren Report as well as stories of alleged

conspirators and their motives. After touring the Museum, we could decide if there was a lone assassin or whether it was a political conspiracy.



**This photo was taken at the front of the Sixth Floor Museum. The group had gathered to wait for the bus. Shown are: Vesta Bowden, Helen Steele, Evelyn Mistich, Bob Steele, Max and Earline Alford, Lynn and Jim Shelley, Ron Evans, Janet Hemby, Walt Smith and Ramona Darden.**

Our next stop was the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) where we had lunch in the Atrium Café. While in the Café we noticed in the two-story window there were some bowls which looked very familiar to those who toured last year. I asked the information desk about the bowls, which were on the Atrium window and was told it was Dale Chihuly's Glass Works placed on the window. I was told Dale Chihuly goes to the DMA annually to give classes to lower income children to inspire their interest in art. Last year in SC our tour group saw a very large display of this traveling exhibit.

Our docent gave us a tour of the Wendy and Emery Reves Showing, which included works by Renoir, Van Gogh, Cezanne and Degas; the Reves Collection, as it is known, is housed in a French villa-like space that replicates the Reves home in France. The already-impressive Sculpture Garden was only enhanced when Dallas philanthropist Raymond Nasher's world-renowned sculpture collection was installed next door to the DMA.

On day two, we went to Ft. Worth to the Amon Carter Museum. Our docent, Nancy Strickland took great care showing wonderful pieces of work and explained the differences and technique of Western Art. The Museum opened in 1961 and was greatly expanded in 2001. It was originally designed to house the

400-odd-piece, western-themed art collection – mostly works by Charles M. Russell and Frederic Remington – of Fort Worth publisher and philanthropist Amon G. Carter Sr., who died in 1955. Today, the first floor is almost exclusively dedicated to his collection.



**In the Cowboy Hall of Fame: Bob Steele, Lynn Shelley, John Smith, Deloris Bitting and Ramona Darden are shown walking through the collection of wagons.**

of money stacked some 4 feet X 4 feet X 5 feet high, in various stages of printing which takes several passes to get all the layers and fibers completed before sending to Federal Reserve Banks around the country.

They shred money to sell in small bags, which is made from the dollars taken out of circulation. I was very tempted to buy each of my three grandchildren a bag, however I was afraid they would spend all their school study time trying to piece dollars back together like a puzzle!

Our last stop was the Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame viewing exhibits of many world champion cowboys and cowgirls displayed through autographed memorabilia with other personal memorabilia of each person. Other items included championship saddles, spurs, boots, trophies and videotaped competition footage. We saw the Sterquell Wagon Collection, which is the world's largest lifestyle wagon collection and features more than 60 wagons, carriages and sleighs.

As we were leaving the Cowboy Hall of Fame we witnessed a simulated cattle drive of Texas Longhorns down the city street as if it was the 1800's. It was something to behold even for a Texan.

On Sunday afternoon we began our tour #3 at the Old Red Museum, which covered Dallas County History from 1873 through 2007. The Museum was divided into four areas of display as follows: Area one covered the early years and explored the geology, natural history, early inhabitants and examined the settlement of what is now known as Dallas County. Area two related the arrival of the railroads in Dallas County during the latter quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Dallas emerged as the region's center for commerce, banking, aviation, and culture. The third area investigated the early 20<sup>th</sup> century history of Dallas County, a remarkable period of change for the County and its citizens. Times covered the Roaring 20s and the Depression, Outlaws, Commercial Aviation, WWII, Home front, and War Industries. The last period was

Our next stop was the Ft. Worth Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) where we witnessed the printing of millions of dollars during our tour. The building is designed so the tour takes place on second floor corridors that overlook the people and machines in the various stages of printing. The BEP is responsible for the design, engraving and printing of all U.S. paper currency. A world leader in printing technology, the Bureau also produces portions of U.S. passports, materials for Homeland Security, military identification cards, Immigration and Naturalization Certificates, White House invitations, Treasury obligations and other U.S. securities. In the Gift Shop you can purchase whole sheets of paper currency in every denomination. This particular BEP prints over 60% of our entire supply of currency. We witnessed pallet after pallet

World Crossroads, which focuses on the people, cultures, businesses, and events that have made Dallas County the internationally known metropolitan area it is today.



The group posed for a photo on the steps of the Old Red Courthouse. Top row: Earl Alford, Max Alford, Ramona Darden, Jim Shelley, and Evelyn Mistich. Second row from top: Joana Breeland, Earline Alford, Joan Alford, Pauline Alford, Don Alford, Deloris and Jim Bitting, Lynn Shelley, and Helen Steele. Front row: Janice Smith, Vesta Bowden, Janet Hemby, Ron Evans, Doris Vetri, Pat Smith, and Bob Steele.

We took a drive-by look at Reunion Tower, which has been closed since 2007 for a \$55 million renovation project that also includes major improvements combining Antares and the Dome Lounge of the top floor of the tower.

Our last stop was the wonderful Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden. Anyone who has ever attempted to garden can only gaze upon this perfectly manicured landscape with wonder. The Arboretum offers a spectacular assortment of trees, bushes and lots of flowers that would put Martha Stewart to shame. Our members were astonished that the Garden had so many different colors of blooming flowers this time of year. The Arboretum is perfect for that wonderful photographic spot(s) for bridal pictures. At any time throughout the gardens, you can see a bride having her wedding picture taken. In each room of the DeGolyer House were docents who were well informed and who shared a multitude of information. The

*(Continued on page 50)*

124 Mary Grace Elmore Alford b. 13 Feb 1885 d. 23 Feb 1946 computed age: 61  
 w/o John Glover Alford  
 AAFA family branch ID is: ALM810GA/SAL716VA

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House is a Spanish Colonial-style '40s mansion on the grounds, and has a sculpture garden with pieces on loan from the Dallas Museum of Art. This home had some very interesting furniture, which was discussed by each docent who explained where each piece came from and its function. The walls of this villa were two feet thick, which made the home very cool or warm which ever you needed for each type of weather. Docents in each room were very informative, even to the number of books (over 10,000) in the Library, which was a very large room with built-in bookshelves on all four walls from floor to ceiling.



Back out in the Gardens which were decorated everywhere with pumpkins which added wonderful color along with enhancing the blooming fall flowers. They even had a pumpkin cottage.

We returned to our hotel and freshened up for our evening meal. The group selected the Red Lobster, and was taken there by the hotel bus (another example of the MCM Elegante' hotel hospitality). It was a relaxing meal with lots of social conversation for one last good visit before we all left for home on Monday morning. One thing for sure, we all look forward to our gathering in 2010 in Louisiana.

Shown in front of the Pumpkin Cottage with different kinds of pumpkins all around are Doris Vetri, and Earline Alford (Photo taken by Max Alford).

*(Continued from page 13, Getting to Know New Members)*

### Great Grand Parents

8. Westly Alford b. Jan. 1850, Louisiana, m. about 1875, 9. Mary \_\_\_\_\_, b. 1855, Alabama.