



Allen is located in Collin County, in North Central Texas. It is 15 miles north of the intersection of Interstate 635 and U.S. 75. To the north lies the City of McKinney, to the south, Plano. U.S. 75 bisects the city in a north/south direction. F.M 2170 runs in an east/west direction in the center of the city. S.H. 5 in east Allen was the main north / south thoroughfare prior to the construction of U.S. 75.

After your driving tour, stop by these local restaurants for more flavor of the history of Allen:
 Allen Café - mural of old downtown
 Arby's -
 Bennigan's - } historic Allen photos
 Scotty P's - }



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ALLEN HERITAGE GUILD

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Historic Allen Driving Tour



History of Allen

Prior to the arrival of European and American immigrants into the Allen area, Caddo, Kiowa, and Comanche Indian tribes inhabited the region. Caddo Indians were primarily agricultural. They had a well-developed sign language and highly cultivated cultural and political contacts. The Comanches were a fierce nomadic people who rode from the plains into the area, and were feared by the Caddo and early settlers. The Comanches were probably responsible for the Munciey massacre along Rowlett Creek.

Fertile land and plentiful water drew immigrants of European decent into this area from as early as the 1840's. These immigrants traveled the Texas Road and the Central National Road, constructed by the Republic of Texas. A stage line ran from Bonham through McKinney to Allen and Plano, crossing Rowlett Creek where S.H. 5 now crosses. Allen was part of the Peter's Colony Land Grant from the Republic of Texas.

This part of Collin County was well populated by 1874 when the Houston & Texas Central Railroad constructed a stone dam, water tower, and pump house on Cottonwood Creek, now in Allen Station Park just north of Exchange Parkway. The stone dam created a pond for the water storage tank that was adjacent to the railroad tracks. Water stops were necessary to refill steam engines every 7 to 10 miles. U.S. Census records indicate railroad laborers originating from Ireland, Germany, Switzerland and the United States lived in the camp in 1880, 1890, and 1900. The camp was occupied by railroad personnel until diesel engines replaced steam engines around the time of WW II. Allen's stone dam may be the only known stone dam on record used as a water station for railroads in Texas, and possibly the only one in the U.S. that is still standing. The dam was designated as a State Archeological Landmark in 2001.

The railroad water stop and newly created town lots established a center for commerce for local farmers and their families and provided better equipment and broader markets for agricultural production. The Houston & Texas Central Railroad filed documents to create the town of Allen from the James L. Reed survey in 1876. The village was named after Ebenezer Allen, a former Republic Attorney General and a promoter of the Houston & Texas Central Railroad. Sam Bass led an outlaw gang that robbed the Allen depot on February 22, 1878. This was the first successful train robbery in Texas.

By 1884, the town of Allen had 3 churches, a flourmill and a population of 350. In 1908, the Texas Traction Company built an electric railroad through town, calling it the Interurban.

Allen was incorporated in 1953 with only 400 residents due to the decline in agriculture and Interurban service which ended in 1948. The construction of U.S. 75 in 1960 had a similar impact on Allen's future as had the railroad almost a century before. By the end of 2005, the population of Allen was 70,381.

Historic Attractions

1. Depot - 100 E. Main - ca 1918, the Houston & Texas Central (H&TC) Railway Company constructed a combination freight /passenger depot in Allen. This present structure, a project of Leadership Allen Class X, is a replica of the original depot and now serves as the Allen Heritage Center.

2. 107 W. Main Street - The upstairs & downstairs of this building have always been separately owned. Mr. Cundiff built the structure in 1913 & operated the downstairs as a drug store. The independent Allen Telephone Company was upstairs. The operator could look out the window to relay messages.

3. 111 and 113 W. Main Street - This is the original Woodmen of the World building, built in 1911. Fraternal organizations met upstairs so unwanted visitors could be noticed. The downstairs was a general merchandise store in the 1910's & 20's, with an early print shop in the back for a newspaper. This building spent time as a grocery store, a barber shop, post office, and a feed store.

4. 207 W. Main Street - This house was built in 1907-08. Wesley Young, an early pharmacist lived here.

5. 103 N. Allen Drive - This is the Walter N. Waters house. Notice the WNW initials built into the lattice work on the front of the house. Mr. Waters owned the Waters grocery store in downtown. This house was built in 1918.



6. 406 W. Main Street - This house is known as the Baccus-Brown house, a prairie foursquare design. It was built in 1911 by the Baccus family, and was later owned by the Brown family.

Allen Heritage Guild Driving Tour

Historic Attractions

7. 105 S. Butler - This Interurban Depot was built in 1913 by the Texas Traction Company, which became the Texas Electric in 1917. The services provided mail, produce, & railway express packages into & out of Allen in the same day. The depot was abandoned in 1948.

8. Methodist Parsonage- 202 S. Butler - ca. 1910. Queen Anne style. Construction contains wood drop siding, wood shingle dormers, & gable & hipped roofs. Passengers from the Interurban would sometimes rest here while waiting on the next car.

9. Belmont House- 103 W. Belmont-ca. 1910. Queen Anne style. T. H. Cundiff, Allen's druggist lived here. This house contains wood clapboard construction, original wood dormers & wrap around porch. It is a Sears and Roebuck design.

10. Allen Cemetery-E. McDermott - This cemetery was established on April 5, 1884 by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Local Lodge #249. It encompasses almost three acres of land. The oldest legible grave marker is dated 1883. A state historical marker adorns the entrance.

11. Allen Heritage Village - 450 E. St. Mary Drive - I-House is a design that contains two front rooms, side by side, with an additional rear room. This house features the atypical central chimney. This is the only surviving example of a dwelling from the late frontier period in Allen. It once stood along the stage route that connected Dallas to McKinney. Archeological evidence suggests that the house was constructed in the 1870's.

Allen Christian Church-ca.1918. The church contains beautiful stained glass that features Jesus as the Good Shepherd with six toes. Other windows contain the names of some of Allen's early pioneer families such as Brown, Ereckson and Bush.



Modified L-plan Bungalow - ca.1920, originally faced the railroad and constructed as a typical L-plan but was later remodeled to incorporate certain craftsman bungalow styles. The Oscar Lynge family once lived here.

Craftsman Bungalow-ca.1920. Built by the Whisenants, this house represents a period when Allen was emerging as a small urban community. This style incorporates arts & craft geometric designs that were popular during this period. The Albert Bolin and Vaughn families once lived here.

Queen Anne Farm House & Barns features a wrap around porch and single attic room with dormers. The house was built circa 1917, the barns around 1930. This is a rare example of a yeoman farmstead with original barns both preserved from a period when cotton was king.

Tenant House -ca. 1940. This is a rare example of how Allen's tenant farmers lived. Such houses were often destroyed or removed when farming ceased. Tenant houses were generally located at the rear of the property & were constructed with cheap materials.

12. St. Mary Baptist Church - 402 E. St. Mary Dr. - ca 1887. This church once served as a school & church for Allen's black community. The Reverend George Anderson served as it's last pastor. It now stands as a monument to our African American heritage.

13. Allen Historical Marker - N. Cedar Drive - Allen Station Park. A State Historical Marker for the City of Allen was placed at this location in 1999, shortly after the opening of the park.



14. Stone Dam - E. Exchange Dr. - The old stone dam spans 100 feet and is 10 feet wide. It was built on property obtained by the H & TC from JW Franklin. The site includes the stone dam, a foundation for a pump house, & a foundation for a water tower. It is now designated by the Texas Historical Commission as a State Archaeological Landmark.



15. Ford Homestead- Bishop Gate Dr. - ca. 1900. Last home of George Washington "Wash" Ford. In 1844, he helped bury the dead from the Muncey massacre, which took place near Rowlett Creek & Jupiter Road. During the civil war, the Quantrill Raiders hid on the premises. This is the birthplace of Pete Ford, for whom a middle school is named.

