



Press Release

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Memorial Park Receives Lone Star Legacy Designation From Texas Recreation and Park Society

Memorial Park became one of five Texas parks honored with the designation as a Lone Star Legacy Park by the Texas Recreation and Park Society (TRAPS) during a ceremony at the association's annual institute in Irving, Texas, on March 1, 2017.

"Memorial Park becomes the fourth park in our system to receive the Lone Star Legacy designation. It joins Hermann Park, Emancipation Park and Sam Houston Park in receiving this prestigious acknowledgment," said Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "We are honored that Memorial Park's historic significance has been recognized by the Texas Recreation and Park Society."

A Lone Star Legacy Park is classified as a park that holds special prominence in the local community and the State of Texas. To qualify for consideration, the park must have endured the test of time and become iconic to those who have visited, played and rested on its grounds. Nominated parks must be a minimum of 50 years old and have to meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The property represents distinctive design and/or construction.
- The park is associated with historic events or sites.
- The park is associated with events specific to the local community/state.
- The park is home to unique natural features.

Memorial Park was established in 1924. Its 1,503 acres were sold at cost to the City of Houston by William and Mike Hogg, sons of James Stephen Hogg, the former governor of Texas. The Park's creation was in response to letters to the editor of the Houston Chronicle, first from Ilona Benda and later from Catherine Mary Emmott, beseeching the City to consider a park in tribute to the soldiers who trained at Houston's Camp Logan and the many who died in World War I.

At the behest of philanthropist Ima Hogg, sister to the Hogg brothers, several stalwart protectors of park lands (Terry Hershey, Frank C. Smith, Jr., Sadie Gwin Blackburn, Dr. John D. Staub, and Sarah Emmott) were charged with protecting Memorial Park from encroachments and development concepts ranging from a fish hatchery to the Astrodome to oil drilling. This group of advocates, through efforts led by Claire Caudill, morphed over time to become the Memorial Park Conservancy, a 501c3 that works in conjunction with the City of Houston to care for the Park.

The five parks receiving the honor in the sixth year of the Texas Recreation and Parks Society statewide program include Parque Zaragoza, Austin; Kiest Park, Dallas; Tandy Hills Natural Area, Fort Worth; Kempner Park, Memorial Park, Houston and Cypress Bend Park, New Braunfels.

About the Texas Recreation and Park Society (TRAPS)

TRAPS is a non-profit 501(c)3 professional and educational organization founded 75 years ago with a membership of over 2,000 professionals. TRAPS is committed to advancing the field of parks, recreation and leisure services in Texas, while advocating for enhanced recreation opportunities and the increase of public green space for Texans. www.traps.org

About the Houston Parks and Recreation Department

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages over 37,851 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston and develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all abilities. For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit www.houstonparks.org.