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## Elgin Committee

Byron Caldwell	Bettye Lofton
Gwendolyn Johnson	Marilyn E. Jones
Bishop Mayes	Amy Miller
Hon. Byron Mitchell	Hon. Mary Penson
Rev. L.H. McShan	Mertis Thomas
Gladys Ward	Elsie Williams

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## Scholarship Fund Donations

Elgin MLK Scholarship Program

Corporate sponsorships and individual donations make it possible to award multiple \$500.00 scholarships to deserving Elgin High School seniors.

Find us on Facebook: Elgin Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Walk & Scholarship Foundation.

Email: [bishopmayes@gmail.com](mailto:bishopmayes@gmail.com)

Phone: Bishop Mayes 512-461-4750

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## Bastrop MLK Committee County Walk Celebration

[www.BastropCountyMLKDay.com](http://www.BastropCountyMLKDay.com)

# ELGIN TEXAS BLACK HISTORY SELF GUIDED TOUR



Community Services  
[www.elgintx.com](http://www.elgintx.com)

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## Booker T. Washington School Madison Street & Houston Street



In 1882 Arthur Westbrook, an ex-slave and landowner, purchased land near the site of the Westbrook cemetery and established the school with twenty five Negro pupils. Located on Beaukiss lane, in the northeast section of town it was named "Colored School".

In 1925, a white frame building was erected at Carter Street, now known as Madison St. and was named Booker T. Washington School. The school's agriculture students built a brick building at this site in 1952 which served as classrooms and it was the Home of the Eagles.

In 1960 the school moved to a new campus on South Avenue F, now called Martin Luther King Boulevard. In 1967 the Washington School closed due to school integration. Robert Robertson led the school initially, followed by J.W. Patton, succeeded by J.C. Madison in 1914, and D.P. Johnson in 1940 who served until its closing in 1967.

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## Texas Farm Mural 21 N. Avenue C– US Post Office



By Julius Woeltz

Woeltz wanted to portray the essential agricultural activities of this small community. "The farms are usually small and production is at a slower pace than that of larger more fully mechanized areas." The current post office had been built in 1939 just as the Great Depression ended. The New Deal commissioned a group of artists to create 1400 different murals for post office buildings in more than 1300 US cities. Works Progress Administration Mural. Artist: Julius Woeltz, (b. 1911, San Antonio-d.1956, San Antonio) Studied in Paris, Chicago, Mexico, and France. Taught at Sul Ross Texas Teachers College in Alpine, New Orleans Art School, and University of Texas at Austin. In addition to his post office murals in Amarillo and Elgin, he painted murals for public buildings in Alpine, Austin, Buda, Fort Worth, and San Antonio.

## Thomas Memorial Park 411 Madison Street



The Thomas family gave the rights to the land which was developed into a park in 1972. It was the first community park in the southeast part of Elgin. It included playground equipment, a concession stand and a baseball field, where weekly softball tournaments were held. This 12-acre park located two blocks off McDade Road at 411 Madison Street, was renovated with grants from the Lower Colorado River Authority and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in 2004. The park now includes: crushed granite walking trail, a nine-hole disc golf course, an additional picnic shelter, modern playground equipment, two additional practice fields, an expanded parking lot, renovated bathrooms/concession area, additional picnic and bar-b-q areas and much more. Additional property has been acquired to expand the park in the future. The park supports the neighborhood and provides recreation opportunities to the community.

## Booker T. Washington Elementary 510 MLK Blvd.



Today the school that opened in 1960, is Booker T. Washington Elementary School. It was Elgin Junior High from 1968 to 2000 with James Franklin as principal for most of those years. An addition to the building in 2001 added a wing of classrooms and it reopened as an elementary school. BTW continues to operate as an elementary school in Elgin ISD with approximately 600 students.

The local landmark marker recognizing Washington School, Home of the Eagles, is located at the property at Madison and Houston Street, designating the primary location of the Washington School.



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Pleasant Bethany Baptist Church  
217 Church Street



Pleasant Bethany Baptist Church Was organized in July 1905, by the late Rev. H. Winn. Worship services were held under a tree, later a brush arbor was built and large logs were used for seats. Some of the deacons were: Mokererson Johnson, Walter Jackson, Sammy Wheat, and Elbert Garner. The Sisters were : Lila Green, Ella Cheeks and others. Here these Faithful Christians worshipped until a church was built.

On February 10, 1910 the dedicatory services of the Pleasant Bethany Baptist Church took place.

Early in the 1920's after the brick sanctuary of Elgin's First Methodist Church was complete, Pleasant Bethany purchased it's white frame building and moved to the east end of Church Street. This building replaced the first box building built under the same leadership of the late Rev. J. H. Winn.

The current pastor is Rev. L. Harrison, Jr.

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Fleming Community Center  
802 North Avenue C



Began life as a hospital in 1938. It was built by Dr. Joe V. Fleming and opened to patients on April 7, 1938 with the main hospital building and a small adjacent structure which was the segregated ward building for the hospital.

Dr. Roy H. Morris took over the hospital on New Year's Day, 1951, after Dr. Fleming died the prior December. By this time the facility was much larger and included structures behind it where the pool sits today.

After Dr. Morris's death in 1978, the community struggled to keep the hospital open. Changing regulations eventually led to the hospital closing its doors in 1982.

In 1988, Jack Harzke became the city manager. Under the direction of Mayor Daughtry and the city council, Harzke acquired the old hospital building and the beautiful acreage it sat on. In 1995 the City of Elgin opened the Morris Memorial Park & Municipal Pool with funding from a Texas Parks & Wildlife Department grant.

In 2013, with the leadership of Mayor Marc Holm and the support of the City Council and Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, the renovation of the old hospital building and the segregated ward building were completed. In 2015 the bath house and concession building were completed and opened to the public. The Fleming Hospital continues to serve the people of Elgin & its surrounds — this time as the Fleming Community Center and City of Elgin offices.

Compiled from History of Elgin Texas 1872 to 1972, interviews with Roy Harvey Morris III, Sandy Murphree, and Elgin Depot Museum archives which are managed by the Elgin Historical Association

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## Westbrook Memorial Gardens

780 FM 3000



Around the year 1889, Mr. Arthur Westbrook gave land for a colored cemetery, which has been in operation more than 125 years. Mr. William “Bill” Westbrook, son of Arthur Westbrook, gave additional acreage for this colored cemetery and he cared for and nurtured this cemetery. After his death the operation of the cemetery was taken over by Ima Westbrook Clay, his niece, who sold family plots for about or less than \$25. In 1969 Mr. Harvey Westbrook extended the cemetery by an additional acre and sold the first family plot in this new section to Dock Vincent. Fairbank Westbrook organized the ladies of the community to keep the cemetery clean and maintained and built a brick wall with the name Westbrook Memorial Gardens. Westbrook Memorial Gardens is recognized with an Elgin Landmark Marker and the Elgin NAACP Branch 6174 funded a new fence. The African American community of Elgin appreciates the generations of the Westbrook family for dedicating the acreage over the years as a place for their loved ones to rest in peace

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## Mt. Moriah Church Baptist Church

701 South Main Street



Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church was organized sometime between the year 1879 and the turn of the century by a few baptized believers who overcame the adversities of slavery. Located about five miles east of Elgin in the Pleasant Grove Community, the origin started under a brush arbor with the pulpit made between two large oak trees on Presley George’s land. In 1889 moving to the now Westbrook Memorial Gardens Cemetery. As the Negro population grew on the south side of Elgin the church located at 701 South Main Street (its present site) in January 1900. In 1954 the first building fund was established, ground breaking services were held in 1960 with the building being dedicated the same year on Easter Sunday. Some of the leaders were: Reverends William A. Pendergrass, Weley, Curtis Hawkins, J.K. Curley, S.M. Clark, J.M. Winn, Riller, James Kelly, J.C. Lott. C.H. Jones. Kimbel , I.N. White, J.A, Kimple, M. L. Price, Cumming, Thomas, A.A. Hill, Frank Erby, E.J. Johnson, Majers, A.T. Thomas, R. A. Westbrook, C.F. M. Jones, L. R. White.

The current pastor is Rev. Steven Ward.

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## Winn Memorial Baptist Church

### 605 Madison Street



In 1933 Reverend J.H. Winn organized Winn's Memorial Baptist Church, holding the first meeting in a tent on the grounds at 605 Madison Street. Reverends Davis, Murray, and Means were the pastors until Reverend Releford became pastor. Under Releford's leadership a building was moved to the premises and remodeled in 1948.

The current pastor for Winn's Memorial is Reverend D. W. Townsend who was called to service October 2, 2001. Under his leadership the church continued to grow and flourish both spiritually and financially. On February 15, 2004, a ground breaking was held and on May 15, 2005 services were held in the new building pictured today. A Junior Women's Auxiliary was added for the first time in 2005 and a van was purchased for the church van ministry. In 2006 the first Women's Ministry with Sister Ruby Montgomery was established. In 2014 Real Talk for Real Problems and the Praise Dancers were organized for teenagers.

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## Elgin Juneteenth Organization

The Texas Juneteenth Holiday was created in 1977 by the Texas Legislature sponsored by Representative Al Edwards and celebrates the end of slavery in the United States. The Elgin Juneteenth Organization was spearheaded and organized by Mertis Thomas and Gladys Ward with the support of Mayor Eric Carlson in 1998. The first president of the Juneteenth Organization was Byron Mitchell. He served as president until June 30, 2008 and retired as a consulting member. The goal of the Elgin Juneteenth Organization is twofold, we want to encourage enrollment in membership, in the effort to establish a larger and more prosperous organization. Secondly, the Organization raises funds for scholarships to help our youth in the community. Our youth is our future and assisting them in their education serves as an example of unity and partnering with the community.

Facebook: Elgin Juneteenth Organization.

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## NAACP Elgin Branch 6174

Founded in 1909, the NAACP is our nation's oldest and largest civil right organization. From the ballot box to the classroom, the thousands of dedicated workers, organizers, leaders and members who make up the NAACP continue to fight for social justice for all Americans.

While the NAACP has won many victories, the times ahead are critical. Membership helps us to close the gaps in the staggering statistics that so blatantly attest to the racial disparities in the United States. Our best hope for protecting the freedom of people and advancing the gains of the NAACP is by becoming a member and vowing to be more active, more vocal and more visible. The local branch was organized in 1971 by Harvey Westbrook and chartered in 1975, its objectives are to ensure community empowerment, create a positive attitude with all ethnic groups, continue the tradition of voter registration and push education, encouraging all that Membership is Power! Sitting President is Gwendolyn Johnson.

Facebook: Elgin TX NAACP Branch 6174

## Immigrant Nation 202 Depot Street



“Immigrant Nation” came about when Advocacy Outreach asked me to design a mural for their wall that reflected the diversity of their clients and the community at large. I chose to represent our entire country as the melting pot of cultures it has become with its underlying protections written into our Constitution. I hope it instills a sense of tolerance for our many cultural influences and a sense of celebration in our unity as Americans.

Tom Besson has lived in the Elgin community since 1978 and has worked as a painter, muralist and graphic artist for fifty years. He can be contacted at 512.629.5216 or [besson@tombesson.com](mailto:besson@tombesson.com). You can learn more about Besson and his work at [www.tombesson.com](http://www.tombesson.com).

## Greater Mt. Vernon Zion A.M.E. Church 215 Church Street

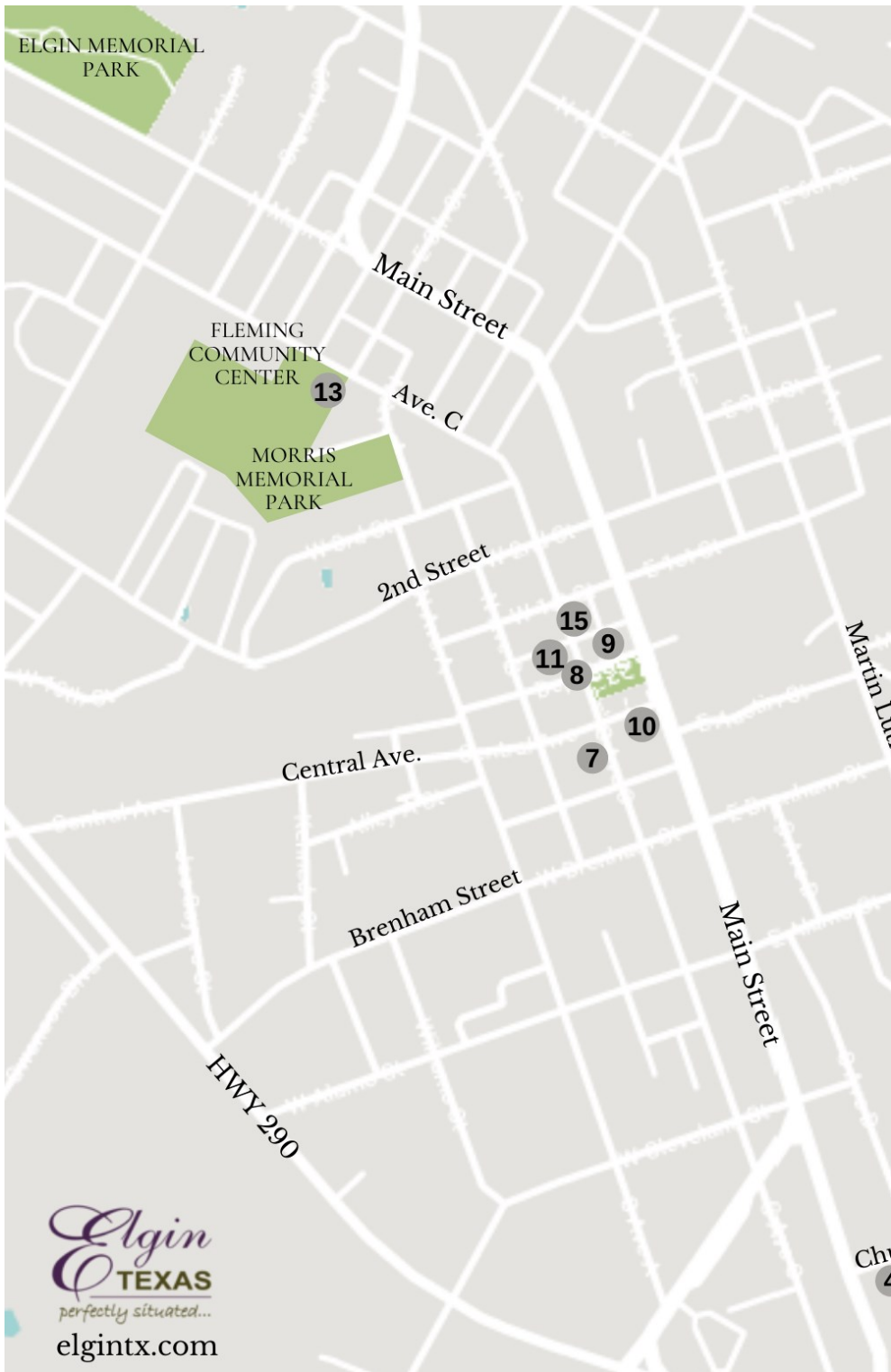


The first A.M.E. Church in Elgin, TX. Was organized on August 28, 1898. The group gathered together at Jerusalem School which served as the meeting place. The Rev. George Brown was the first pastor. A brush arbor about six miles from town served the congregation as its first place to worship.

During the Tenth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 2003 Annual Conference (San Antonio, TX) ; Rev. Damon Blakeley reported to the conference assembly and recommend that Pleasant Zion A.M.E. and Mt. Vernon A.M.E. become one congregation, a consolidated body spearheaded by Brother Ira Bell Sr., a steward of Pleasant Zion A.M.E.

The church was aptly named Greater Mt. Vernon Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The current pastor is the Rev. JR Johnson.



## McShan's Barbershop 101 Central Avenue



### “All in the Family”

It is 2021 and McShan's Barbershop, located in Elgin, Texas at 101 Central and Main street is open for business. S.H. McShan began as a young man cutting hair in the 1950's at 14 Depot Street and became a Master Barber in 1964. “When I started haircuts were 50 cents,” said McShan. He moved to the current location in the early 1970's. In 2006 his grandson Terrance McDowell (known to all as Big T) decided to join his grandfather at the shop and now that McShan has retired (2014), Terrance is running the business. Keeping the business in the family is important to McShan. Mr. McShan is active in his church and serves on the Elgin Economic Development Corporation board. Due to COVID-19, Terrance works by appointment only to keep in order of CDC guidelines.



## Dorothy's Fine Jewelry

104 Depot Street



Dorothy's Fine Jewelry is a destination for all parts of our community. Dorothy McCarther, a certified gemologist, offers unique customer service such that her customers now include third generations of the families she has served since the 1980's. She carries an array of the highest quality gemstones, high school class rings, wedding band sets, charms, rosaries, distinctive jewelry enjoyed by the African American and Hispanic communities, estate pieces, and more. Another element that sets her store apart and makes it a destination is the Salt & Pepper Beauty Supply component. She offers everything for specialty hair needs including braids, a variety of high-quality wigs, and custom lady's hats. Established in 1992, Dorothy's moved to 104 Depot Street in 1996. She actively participates the Main Street Program, Chamber of Commerce, Planning & Zoning Commission, and her church. Her beautiful smile, warm spirit, caring, and knowledge brings people back and keeps people coming from Taylor, Austin, Paige, Giddings, Lexington and throughout Central Texas.

## Black History Self Guided Tour

### Elgin, Texas

1. **Booker T. Washington School Plaque** | Corner of Madison St. & Houston St.
2. **Booker T. Washington Elementary School** | 510 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
3. **Pleasant Bethany Baptist Church** | 217 Church St.
4. **Mt. Moriah Baptist Church** | 701 S. Main St.
5. **Winn Memorial Baptist Church** | 605 Madison St.
6. **Greater Mt. Vernon Zion A.M.E Church** | 215 Church St.
7. **Maya Angelou Mural** | 202 S. Ave. C.
8. **Never Give Up Mural** | 200 Depot St. #A
9. **Dorothy's Jewelry Shop** | 104 Depot St.
10. **McShan's Barber Shop** | 101 Central Ave.
11. **Immigrant Nation Mural** | 200 Depot St.
12. **Westbrook Cemetery** | 780 FM3000
13. **Fleming Community Center** | 802 N. Ave. C
14. **Thomas Memorial Park** | 411 Madison St.
15. **Texas Farm Mural** | 21 N Avenue C

## Maya Angelou Mural

### 202 South Avenue C



Artist Statement: "Broken Wings" depicts Maya Angelou with wings spread wide with individual feathers falling away. The imagery represents discrimination and unhealed emotional wounds that can never be completely healed, only overcome utilizing perseverance and contentiousness. The quote is title of Maya Angelou's 1969 autobiography, detailing traumatic events throughout the artist's childhood. Angelou overcame an enormous number of obstacles and explored a variety of careers to include: poet, dancer, street car operator, activist, etc.

Artist Ashley Smith: Smith is a native Elgin, Texas self-taught artist, gallery owner, and entrepreneur. Smith is wife and mother of 3 and St Edward's University graduate with a Bachelor's in Business Administration, Master's in Business Administration, and is working towards a PhD in Leadership from Our Lady of the Lake University.

## Never Give Up Mural

### 202 Depot Street- Advocacy Outreach



The mural is wearing three skins. The first skin is the rainbow. Recognition of the LGBTQ community, respect for love across the spectrum of gender. The second skin are the words we live by: Love will bring us together. Love will overcome all hate and injustice. Love and Peace. Your love matters. Love your neighbor. The top layer—what is up front right now, on our minds—the battles for racial justice. The rage we feel about oppression and unfairness. The determination to prevail. Never Give Up! Never Give In! Persist and Resist.

Artist: Cheech Ramirez cultivated himself as a street artist early on in his life, in the sunny cityscapes of South Florida. He spent an extensive part of his youth scouring parts unknown, to unearth any opportunity he could to express himself. Even in the darkest of places he found light. Cheech was consumed entirely by a gritty subculture of graffiti. He was captivated not only by the colors painted on the walls, but also by colors worn on the skin of his fellow artist and friends. This was something that would peak his interest for eons to come. As fate would have it Cheech found himself blindly diving head first into the vast world of tattooing; a culture that he would come to cherish as much as street art. Currently based out of Austin, Texas Cheech continues to thrive making his name on skin.