

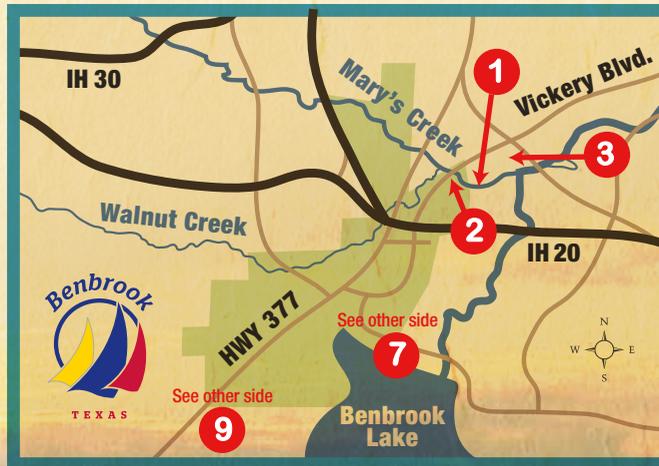
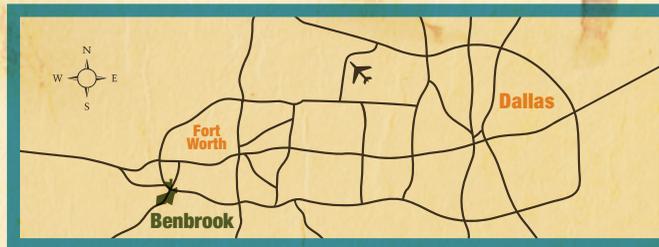


## James M. Benbrook

fought for the Union during the Civil War and was seriously injured at the Battle of Shiloh. After the war, he traveled with his family throughout the South for nearly 10 years, finally settling permanently in the community of Marinda in 1874. He found success as a farmer and businessman, and in 1876, convinced the Texas & Pacific Railroad to build a station on his property. The Marinda settlement was centered on a four-block area surrounding the new "Benbrook's Station" (near the present junction of IH 20 and US Hwy. 377). It soon became identified with the station and the community's name was changed to Benbrook. The politically active James served as Justice of the Peace in the small community for many years, and became known as "Squire" due to his English heritage and proud manner. He passed away at the age of 79 in 1907.

## Vernon & Irene Castle

The hugely popular husband and wife team were the first major international exponents of modern dancing, and helped launched the ballroom dance craze of the 1920's. Their fame & influence was so great that Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers starred in movie based upon their lives in 1939. See #6 for more information.



### Mary's Creek

1



0.2 miles NW of S. Z. Boaz Park Dr. on Winscott Rd./Vickery Blvd.

Named for early settlers Mary Criswell & her three sons who drowned in the creek during a flood. Following the Civil War, it served as a refuge and hiding place for murderous & thieving gangs, including Sam Bass and the Bold Banditti gang. A one-lane bridge was built in 1922 and replaced with the current, larger structure in 1993.

### Mary's Creek Railway Bridge

2



Not accessible to the public

Site of train robberies in June and September of 1887 by the Rube Burrow gang, who stopped the train so that the express car was just off the high trestle over Mary's Creek. All cars to the rear of the express were stretched out across the narrow bridge, discouraging passengers and crew from dropping down to the track and coming forward to trouble the robbers.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

### Willburn Cemetery

3



3720 Streamwood Rd. in Ridglea Country Club Estates

Located between two houses in a quiet, upscale neighborhood, this small cemetery sits behind a high wooden fence and holds approximately 15 graves. The last burial took place in 1924, and the back fence of the cemetery lies along the boundary line between Fort Worth and Benbrook.

More information about the history of Benbrook can be found in "Images of America: Benbrook" available from Arcadia Publishing, [arcadiapublishing.com](http://arcadiapublishing.com).

The documentary "Once Upon a Time in Benbrook: A History" can be viewed at [benbrook-tx.gov/historyvideo](http://benbrook-tx.gov/historyvideo).

Design and color photography by [ralphcreative.com](http://ralphcreative.com)

# Benbrook HISTORY TOUR

**Carruthers Field**

**4**



Highlighted area on map indicates location of the airfield's buildings

World War I pilot training airfield for the Canadian Royal Flying Corps, 1917-1918, later turned over to the U.S. Army. Located south of Mercedes St. in what is now Benbrook Lakeside subdivision, the 34 buildings were razed in the 20's.

**Benbrook Cemetery**

**5**



Mercedes St. near intersection of Winscott Rd.

Site of many early settlers' graves, including those moved from several rural cemeteries during construction of Benbrook Dam. The grave site of town namesake James M. Benbrook, located near the north end of the cemetery, is designated with an Official Texas Historical Marker.

**Memorial Oak (The Hanging Tree)**

**6**



From the parking lot at the end of Memorial Oak Dr., walk 0.2 mile on paved trail, then turn right onto walkway bridge path; at the end of the bridge, turn left - tree is located at the end of the path.

Once the largest Bur Oak in Texas, it was the location of a hanging in 1884. Three followers of famed horse thief "Dutch Henry" Borne met their end here after their capture by local ranchers near Mary's Creek.

**Benbrook Dam**

**7**



Lakeside Dr. / E. County Rd. 1042

Built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers between 1947 and 1950, with water impounding beginning in 1952. Much of Dutch Branch Ranch, owned by Elliott Roosevelt, son of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, was condemned by the government for construction of the lake.

**Old Methodist Church**

**8**



Near the intersection of Winscott Rd. & Old Benbrook Rd.

Former location of a Greek Revival style structure and built between 1929 & 1931, the church had a sanctuary upstairs and classrooms in the basement, as well as its own electric light plant. A new church was built on Bryant St. in 1957.

**Benbrook School 1912-1935**

**10**



500 Winscott Rd. near the Weatherford International Bldg.

No longer standing, this two-room red brick school building was constructed to replace the previous school building at a cost of \$3000.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

**Benbrook School 1935-1953**

**12**



Weatherford International Bldg. at 500 Winscott Rd.

The flagstone structure had four rooms with a large gymnasium and stage with dressing rooms in one end. The gymnasium is now part of the Weatherford International building.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

**South Z. Boaz Park**

**16**



Old Benbrook Rd. across from the VFW Post

A branch of the "Old Chisholm Trail" for cattle drives passed through Benbrook, crossing Mary's Creek in the area of park, as did the Butterfield Overland Mail Trail.



**Corn House**

**9**



11555 Hwy. 377 S. on the east side of the highway near the top of the hill

Located in southwest Benbrook, the house was built in 1919 by James Corn, a rancher who owned more than 55,000 acres.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

**Vernon Castle Memorial**

**11**



Corner of Cozby St. W. & Vernon Castle Ave, next to a water tower

One half of the world famous Vernon & Irene Castle dance team who introduced the Tango to the U.S. in 1913, Captain Vernon W. Castle (b.1887) was Commander of the 84th Canadian Training Squadron, Royal Flying Corps. He was killed on Feb. 15, 1918 near this site during a training flight. The memorial was erected in 1966 and restored/rededicated in 1997.

**Old Settlement & FDR sidetrack**

**13**



Near intersection of IH 20 & Hwy. 377, & west along Old Benbrook Rd.

Location of the no longer standing train depot & homes of early settlers. While visiting his son, Benbrook resident Elliott Roosevelt, then President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's specially outfitted railcar sat on the sidetrack located here.

**Site of the boyhood home of Lee Harvey Oswald**

**14**



Near the corner of San Saba Ave. & Del Rio St. behind Waffle House

The assassin of President John F. Kennedy lived in a house on Saba Street as a young boy with his mother, Marguerite, and two brothers from 1945-1946. As a 1st grader, he attended Benbrook Commons School, receiving A's and B's, plus an A in Citizenship.

**Sproles House**

**15**



Sproles Dr. & McKinley St. behind Quik-Trip

Constructed in 1934 and served as the center of a large cattle ranch, much of which was submerged by Benbrook Lake in 1952. Restored in 1996.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

*Benbrook*  
**HISTORY TOUR**