

HISTORY & FOLKLORE

From the Liberty County Historical Commmission Walking Tour –

The Allison Funeral Service Building 1517 Trinity Street

The building at 1517 Trinity was built in 1925, replacing a series of earlier structures that had been on that plot of land since about 1831. The current Post Office was the Mercado (marketplace) at that time and a site of commerce. The city

block was originally Thornton ranch land (per Susan Allison). Carrie Thornton, “Grammy,” lived in the two-story house on the corner of Trinity and Bowie. Mrs. Thornton was widowed in 1909, which left her with five children and few re-

sources. She added two additional apartments to her home and rented them out. Mrs. Thornton approached Mr. Hartel, the local banker, who helped her obtain oil leases in Daisetta. She took her horse and buggy to Daisetta each morning with her boys to check the leases, which gave her sons an understanding of work in the oilfield. Grammy Thornton was the great grandmother of Reuben and Billy Allison. Reuben and Billy grew up in the house between Grammy Thornton and the funeral home. It had been built by Grammy Thornton and sold to Jewell and Norman Allison, their parents.

After his return from service in the Pacific following World War II, Reuben Allison founded Allison Funeral Service in 1947 with his brother Billy, also a returning vet. W.M. Parker drew the plans for renovation of the building, with an apartment on the second floor. At the time the funeral service opened, the Allisons had the only ambulance in the area, which was emblazoned with “18” on the side (the business phone number). The hearse was present at all local athletic events so that injured athletes could be transported to the hospital. The business also had the only radio tower between Houston and Beaumont.

Reuben and his wife, Beth, both licensed funeral directors, co-owned the fu-

neral service for over 50 years. They raised their family in the upstairs apartment until moving into the two-story house next door (corner of Trinity and Crockett). The house was built by William Drussell and was a Sears Roebuck mail-order kit home (per Susan Allison). In 1963, Allison Funeral Service relocated to its current location at 1101 N. Travis St., Liberty. At some point, the Farmer family purchased the house at 1517 Trinity, remodeled it, and lived there for some years. Brandon Davis has used the building as his law firm since purchasing it in 2011.

If you could do a “then and now” peek at the house, you would note the following:

- The exterior of the house looks different. The right half of the front of the house was about six feet deeper than the other half. Reuben Allison extended the front of the house so that it was equal (or flat) and added the balcony and columns.
- The current large room on the bottom right was originally the chapel, with an area set aside for a choir (now a half bath and closet).
- The current kitchen in the back left half of the structure was the “medicine room,” where bodies were embalmed and prepared for burial.
- The current conference room was the viewing room, and Mr. Davis’ office was a

family gathering room

• In the main downstairs hallway, there is a 6-7-foot section of flooring that had been removed and returned to its original location. You can see the replaced nail outline, which is maybe one-quarter-inch off from the grooves in the original flooring. It turns out this was the place to access the coffins stored beneath the floor. It is

said that students who attended Sam Houston Elementary across the street, where the current post office is now located, used the funeral home as a point of reference when learning new vocabulary words... like funeral and coffin. There was probably other speculation as well, especially about ghost stories!

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From Illustrated Press, Feb. 15, 1962 –

Reuben Allison purchases Pace-Stancil Funeral Homes in Liberty, Dayton and Anahuac from Tolers

After more than twenty-one years of operation in this area, the Pace-Stancil Funeral Homes have ceased to operate under that name. Transactions were completed in recent days in which the properties and functions of the Liberty, Dayton and Anahuac plants of Pace-Stancil were sold to Reuben and Beth Allison, who have owned and operated Allison Funeral Home in Liberty heretofore. Mr. and Mrs. Glendon Toler and Mrs. J.W. Stancil emphasize that they will cooperate fully with the

Allisons from their Cleveland Funeral Home, the only one which they have retained.

The Tolers have worked under a heavy load for some time, and wish to slacken their pace somewhat. The untimely death of Mr. J.W. Stancil last year added much to the duties of the couple, who have made their home in Dayton. They plan to move to Cleveland. Glen Toler was mayor of Dayton from 1950 to 1952, and has served several years recently as president of the Dayton School Board.



From The Illustrated Press of Liberty County, May 17, 1962 –
Reuben Allison, new owner of the Dayton, Liberty and Anahuac funeral homes formerly owned by Pace-Stancil.





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From The Illustrated Press of Liberty County, Feb. 15, 1962 –
Reuben Allison, before the former Pace-Stancil Funeral home on North Travis in Liberty. He says that the Allison Funeral Home on Trinity Avenue will be closed in time, with services to be conducted entirely at the three new facilities.

Burial & Cremation services for all faiths
Military funerals
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Pace-Stancil
FUNERAL HOME AND CEMETERY

Cleveland
(281) 592-2641
303 E. Crockett Street
Cleveland, TX 77327

Dayton
(936) 258-5300
1304 N. Cleveland - Hwy. 321
Dayton, TX 77535

Coldspring
(936) 653-2641
14250 Hwy 150 West
Coldspring, TX 77331