

Mary Frances “Chan” Johnson Paup Driscoll

Mary Frances “Chan” Johnson Paup Driscoll died in Midland, Texas on October 8, 2007. Chan was a near 60-year resident of Midland having moved to Midland in 1948. She was born sometime after World War I in Breckenridge, Texas. Chan was never too candid about her exact age, but she was a fourth generation Texan – being a descendant of a West Texas pioneer family. Her loving parents were Robbie Davis Johnson and T. Edgar Johnson.

During the Great Depression, her parents moved to Vernon, Texas in the early 1930’s where she attended public schools. She was the Vernon High School homecoming queen her senior year. She attended Christian College in Columbia, Missouri, and later transferred to her beloved University of Texas, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree. It was there that she began her first life-long association as a member of the Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority. She was runner-up in the Posture Contest at UT in 1942! She was also a Cactus Beauty and UT Sweetheart Finalist her senior year.

During World War II, she married and thereafter had her three children, Patricia Louise Paup Lambert, now deceased but formerly of Houston, Henry B. Paup now of Fort Worth, and T. Edgar Paup now of Fort Worth. After moving to Midland in 1948, she began her second life-long association with the First Presbyterian Church. This was in spite of her long-time family legacy as Methodists. Chan taught the three-year-old Sunday school class for 13 years, and she was president of the Presbyterian Women for two terms. She was much loved by the people of Midland, and every year she regularly called each Presbyterian church member on their birthday.

She was a member of the Junior League for over 50 years. She twice served the Kappa Alpha Theta alumnae of Midland as their president, and also served one term as president of the Midland Panhellenic Association. Chan was a huge fan of the opera and a consistent supporter of the Midland-Odessa Symphony. At her death, she funded an endowed Theta Academic Scholarship for Midland Thetas attending college in the State of Texas.

A passionate student of history, in 1981 she composed her personal history of Chimney Creek Ranch in her booklet entitled “Chimney Creek Crossings” (see elsewhere on this website). On a state-wide level, she served one term on the board of the Texas Historical Commission Foundation. She was solely responsible for the first Texas Historical Commission marker dedicated on Chimney Creek in 1982. Her love of history is one of her finest legacies.

Despite her ardent support of the University of Texas, Chan was a founding director of the Texas A&M Press and former president of the Texas A&M Friends of the Library. In fact, she donated both the one millionth and two millionth volumes to the Texas A&M Sterling C. Evans Library. She was the founder of the Midland A&M Mothers’ Club and served two terms as its president.

In 1973, she inherited the Chimney Creek Ranch upon the death of her mother, Robbie Davis Johnson. She was critically involved in the management, operations, and numerous physical improvements made to the ranch over the next 34 years. A fitting example of this is the 10-acre lake initiated shortly before her death in 2007 and completed in 2008 and named in her honor and memory – Chan’s Lake.