

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



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Abstract: **Bill Hartman**

Mr. Hartman was raised in La Porte, Baytown and Beaumont before moving to Fort Bend in 1977. He and his family have been involved in the newspaper business for decades beginning with his father's involvement for 35 years as editor and publisher of a family owned newspaper business in Texas and in the South. Bill started Hartman Newspapers, Inc. (HNI) in 1974 when the opportunity arose to purchase 7 of the newspapers from the Carmage Walls family. The printing of the papers was done in Rosenberg so it was natural to move closer to the operation. Today, HNI owns a dozen newspapers of various sizes concentrating on community news. He, his father and his son have all served as President of the Texas Daily Newspaper Association.

Bill, with other community leaders was instrumental in creating the Fort Bend Economic Development Council in 1986 to recruit clean businesses and industries. He served as President of the Rose-Rich Chamber of Commerce, the Rosenberg Rotary, the Fort Bend County Fair board, Richmond State School Volunteer Services Council, OakBend Medical Center board and President of the Baseball Writers Association of America Houston Chapter.

He and his wife, Laura enjoy spending time with 11 grandchildren and 2 dogs.

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Interview Summary

People (in order mentioned in interview)

Herb Appel – community leader

Mary Hartman Brown – sister

Fred Davenport – regional manager for HL&P

Fred Hartman – father

Fred B. Hartman – son

Justine Elizabeth Black Hartman – mother

Laura Hartman – spouse

Lee Hartman – son

Clyde King – president of Hartman Newspapers

John McGraw – New York Giants manager

Chris Sansone – son in law

Elizabeth Hartman Sansone – daughter

Places / Businesses

Alvin-Pearland, Texas

Baylor University

Baytown, Texas

Beaumont, Texas

Brazoria County

Brazos River & Gulf of Mexico

Brazos School District

Fort Bend County Fair

Fort Bend Economic Development Council

Fort Bend ISD

Harris County

Henderson, Texas

Kaufman, Texas

Lamar CISD

La Porte, Texas

Marlin, Texas

Montgomery County

Polly Ryon/OakBend Hospital

Richmond State School

Richmond, Texas

Rockport, Texas

Rose-Rich Chamber of Commerce

Rosenberg, Texas

St. John's United Methodist Church

Sugar Land, Texas

Terrell, Texas

Events

Raised in a newspaper family. After graduation from Baylor University, he became Editor and Publisher at age 29 of the Beaumont Enterprise and Journal newspapers.

Bill, his two sons, Fred and Lee Hartman, and daughter, Elizabeth Sansone and four grand children are owners of Hartman Newspapers, LP, a family business operating a dozen community papers across Texas. Hartman Newspapers was chartered in 1974.

Bill has shared his time and talent with numerous business and non-profit organizations such as Fort Bend EDC, Richmond State School, Rosenberg Rotary, Fort Bend Fair Association, and OakBend Hospital.

His love of baseball provided the opportunity to be involved for over 25 years, as well as serve as President, of the Houston chapter of the Baseball Writers Association of America.

Bill jokes about entering Baylor University as a Presbyterian rather than a Baptist and graduating as a Methodist.

He and his wife Laura enjoy spending time with their 11 grandchildren and 2 dogs.