

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



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Abstract: **Robert Glendell Gilmore**

This interview was taken as part of a series on the Wessendorff/Henderson families in Fort Bend County. Mr. Gilmore also discusses working with Mr. and Mrs. Wessendorff on civic and City business.

Mr. Gilmore was City Manager of Richmond Texas from 1990 until 2013. He discusses the changes he experienced within Richmond during those years, including transitioning to computers, population growth, parking problems, and infrastructure issues (water availability, wastewater, surface water) and the growing diversity of the population

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Interview Summary

People (in order mentioned in interview)

Mildred Hallmark – wife’s great-aunt

Mayor Moore – City of Richmond

Terri Vela – Richmond Finance Director, succeeded Gilmore as City Manager.

Harry Mellon – grocery store owner

Joe Clyde Wessendorff – adviser, friend

Walter Mischer – real estate developer

John David Gilmore – son

Robert Bryan Gilmore – son

Mary Hallmark Gilmore – wife

Mrs. Wessendorff – generous employer

Places / Businesses

St. Joseph’s Hospital, Houston, Texas

United States Geological Survey

Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

Richmond Racetrack on FM 762

Events

Robert worked for 31 years for Western Electric, which later became part of the AT&T system.

After retiring from AT&T as the head of the budget department, he was hired as the Richmond City Manager in 1990 with an initial charge to develop a budget for the city.

December 31, 1999 – Year 2000 (Y2K) challenges did not materialize in Richmond although many, include the state government, expressed great anxiety.

When hired as the city manager the City of Richmond did not have 24/7 policing or a dedicated fire department. The county patrolled Richmond overnight and volunteer firemen had to scramble from full-time jobs to initiate a delayed response to fires. Gilmore trained the Street Department and Water Department employees to respond to fires until the city could afford a fire department. Today’s Police Department operates 24/7 with trained law enforcement officers on duty all the time.

Population growth within the city has increased as well as citizen dependence on water and infrastructure systems. People don’t wash clothes the same way they did fifty years ago so the city’s water pipes and capacity to flow was improved. Additional water wells have been added but the challenges remain and will need continue to be addressed by city leaders and citizens.