

# FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

## *ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE*



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### Abstract: **Stewart Morris Sr.**

Mr. Morris Sr. is an amazing storyteller and history buff, especially Confederate history. He is not only a student of history, he has been involved in making history in the title industry, saving historical buildings, funding the creation of museums, and developing the Sugar Creek subdivision which displays 5 of the 16 pink Texas granite columns that were salvaged from the Old Galveston Courthouse. Ten of the columns are at HBU and 1 is in Nassau Bay to honor the NASA astronauts.

Stewart shares stories about his time in the US Navy during WWII, his family history of moving to Texas during the GTT – Gone to Texas era; building Stewart Title into an international company; his significant role in starting Houston Baptist University (HBU); and his involvement with fellow rancher and friend Hilmar Moore, developer/banker Jake Kamin and entrepreneur Miss Ima Hogg.

He credits his wife, Joella, of over 70 years with creating the ideas and getting Stewart to make them happen. “She was interested in everything that’s good in my life.” Together they raised 3 children who are involved in the daily management of the Morris Family companies.

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## Interview Summary

### People (in order mentioned in interview)

Carlotta Morris Barker – daughter  
 Dolph Briscoe – former Governor of Texas  
 A P George – landowner & rancher in Fort Bend  
 Miss Ima Hogg – Houston entrepreneur  
 Sam Houston – former Governor of Texas  
 Jake Kamin – developer  
 Robert E. Lee – Confederate General  
 Hilmar Moore – Mayor of Richmond & Rancher  
 Joella Morris – spouse  
 William Carlos Morris – father  
 Willie Stewart Morris – mother  
 Stewart Morris Jr. – son  
 Allan Shivers – former Governor of Texas  
 Lisa Morris Simon – daughter  
 R E “Bob” Smith – Landowner & Rancher  
 Clegg Stewart – cousin  
 Maco Stewart Jr. – cousin  
 Minor Stewart – cousin  
 Willie Stewart – cousin  
 William H. Stewart – grandfather  
 Bert Winston – landowner & Investor

### Places / Businesses

Cambridge County, Maryland  
 Civil War  
 Columbia University  
 Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce  
 Fort Bend County, TX  
 Galveston, TX  
 Galveston County Courthouse  
 Gonzales, TX  
 Houston Baptist University (HBU)  
 Monticello – home of Thomas Jefferson  
 Panama Canal  
 Rice University  
 River Oaks Country Club  
 Seattle, WA  
 Stewart Title Company  
 Sugar Creek Subdivision  
 Sugar Land Railroad Depot  
 South Korea  
 Southern Methodist University (SMU)  
 Southern National Bank  
 University of Texas

### Events

Stewart Morris Sr. served in the US Navy during WWII after graduating from Columbia University.

He has been involved with the building of Stewart Title Company for over 84 years into an international company with over 7600 outlets in all 50 states and 40 countries. The fourth generation is now running the enterprise.

Stewart, and his wife of over 70 years have a shared love of history and the protection of historical artifacts. They created the Southern Museum housed at HBU to allow younger generations to learn and understand some history of the US, especially the Confederacy.

Morris, along with developer Jake Kamin created the premier 1,500 acre subdivision called Sugar Creek in Fort Bend County.

He was a lifelong friend of many notable leaders including Miss Ima Hogg, Hilmar Moore, Bob Smith and others. His influence will be felt for generations.

Stewart Morris Sr. wants all generations to enjoy reading his stories about the history of Texas through his experience and that of his ancestors who GTT – Gone to Texas.