

# Kirby HS Reunion honors Class of 1973

*Tyler County Booster (5-11-2023), 1A, 5A, 2B.*

by [Michael G. Maness](#)



Kirby High School Honor Class of 1973

The Kirby High School Reunion at the WISD Elementary Cafeteria Saturday afternoon, May 6, celebrated the “Honor Class of 1973.”

With great distinction, at the 50-year mark from graduation, the '73 class was welcomed for the first time to this unique gathering of alumni, who gather each year for fellowship, fun, and nostalgic recollections. As tradition has it, the class of '73's honored table was front and center, surrounded by tables of various classes going back to 1942.

Over 300 gathered from all over Texas and beyond.

Sharon Brown, class of '71, coordinated the whole, and she gave a big thanks to Mary Alice Nagypal Hall who had led the gatherings for so many years. Brown has been a teacher at St. Paul's Episcopal School for over 40 years.

Ky Griffin, class of '72, was again master of ceremonies.

Once again, Walter Plant, famed local blind musician, played music from the '70s, aiding in the nostalgia, as with Neil Diamond's “Sweet Caroline” wafting through the air, “Where it began, I can't begin to knowing; But then I know it's growing strong, Was in the spring....”

This year's theme was “Nineteen Hundred and Yesterday ... at Kirby HS.” Dixie Jarrott, class of '66, led the invocation, and Martha Kimbrough, class of '62, the benediction.

Brown welcomed all, and several honored guests, including long-time teachers of the bygone era Lionel Reese, Sergio Ramos, and Coach Norman Turner.



Each class has an “agent” that helps Brown coordinate with the respective classes. Prior to the luncheon, several classes meet independently on Friday evening at restaurants or in homes throughout Tyler County, mostly led by that class’s agent.

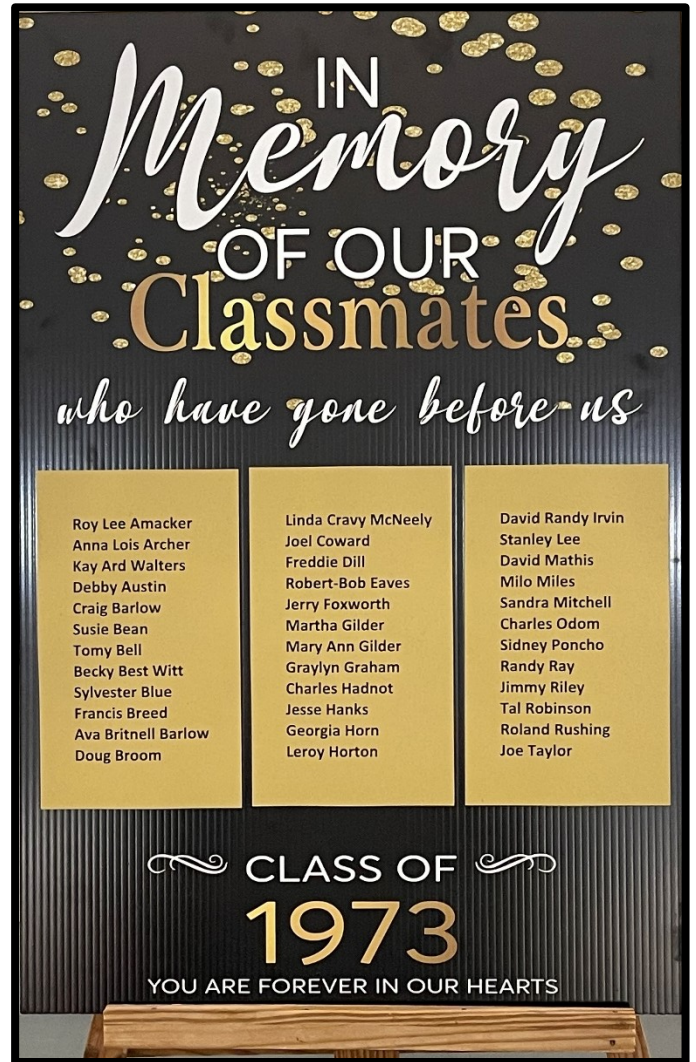
The Honor Class of '73 was represented by Jerry Risinger who ascended the podium to recall a few memories. He felt honored and felt 1973 Woodville was “Mayberry,” a wonderful time with a host of great “relationships,” and he wished all well and that they had many more splendid years to come.

Jack Clark was the most senior alumnus, class of 1942, making this his 81st year since graduation. He was alone, having outlived all his peers, and will turn 98 next month in June. He is renowned in Tyler County for his decades of work with the forestry association, though he said he has “slowed down a bit.”

Clark recalled how their 1942 senior class grew sweet potatoes and sold them locally. From the money made, they took a trip to Chicago to watch a baseball game. They rode on their school buses. Though he has forgotten the names of the baseball teams, he fondly remembers the comradery among the boys in his class during that special trip.

The decorations team was acknowledged, so many helped, and kudos went to Walling Signs for several artworks, including a 10-foot banner raised behind the podium of a photo of the “old school” they had attended. Fred Sullivan, class of '61, noted how the school had burned down a couple of times. The photo was of the newer school rebuilt in 1970s, which was the school the Honor Class had attended.

A big thanks went to Linda Johnson and associates from the Woodville Chapter of the Texas School Food Services Association that prepared a delectable lunch of chicken spaghetti, Mandarin orange salad, fancy green beans, carrot soufflé, and garlic bread. In the two far corners of the cafeteria were ice cream stands. The alums and guests lined up for banana splits topped with potpourri of various crushed nuts, whipped cream, and chocolate, strawberry, and fudge syrup.





The Food Services Association is made up of volunteers, and all the funds they receive go to scholarships for Woodville students. Over the decades, they donated many tens of thousands of dollars.

Sherman and Dorothy Powell, class of '50, recollected what a different era back in the 1950s. Sherman worked two jobs his senior year, getting up at 2 a.m. to throw the *Beaumont Enterprise* and the *Beaumont Journal*, then going to school half a day, then onto Richard Best's pharmacy. Two of the three pharmacies in Woodville in the '50s had soda fountains—fond memories.

The KHS reunion gathered at 10 a.m., allowing all to fellowship, talk, recollect, and retell their stories for two hours before lunch began at 12 p.m.

After all had eaten, Brown and Griffin facilitated the "Legacy of Ideas," which led to their closing. They want all to help tell how their beloved school shall be remembered—their legacy—and, hopefully, next year report back with more "ideas" on how to perpetuate their affection for their school.

In closing, all rose and sang their class song, "Hail Kirby High School, hats off to you; Ever you'll find us loyal and true."



[www.PreciousHeart.net](http://www.PreciousHeart.net)