



THE STOCKDICK LEGACY

Iconic Katy family spans five generations, more than 120 years, making a lasting imprint on the community

Written by Wendy Teng and Katy Magazine's Editors

The Stockdicks put their footprints on Katy land long before the town of Katy even existed. In honor of the family's contributions to Katy, many Katyites have recognized area sites named in their honor like Stockdick Road, Stockdick School Road, and Stockdick House at Heritage Park.

The First Pioneer in the Family

In 1895, Adam H. Stockdick settled in the area. "There was nothing here but a shed over a water well. Most settlers had to camp in tents or railcars until their homes were built. Living conditions could be very tough," says great-granddaughter Rosanne Stockdick Lopez. Adam came to build a home for his family who was still in Iowa at that time. Although he was a school teacher, he was not able to make an income with his teaching certificate.

To support his family, he began farming and became the first land agent for the MKT Railroad. Writing letters to

friends and family, he attracted and brought many settlers to colonize and develop the area with businesses. Adam's great-grandchildren Janet Stanberry and Ronald Scott share, "Adam influenced many families to move from Iowa to Katy based on the fertile farming land available." The drilling of the earliest deep water wells for rice farming is another remarkable achievement by Adam that was documented in 1902.

In total, it is estimated that Adam was able to bring 15 pioneering families to settle. After he left the MKT Railroad, Adam opened his own real estate company and sold land to families coming to the small town. He was one of the first individuals in Katy to see electricity, phone service, and indoor water piped to homes. Stanberry and Scott say, "He saw transportation go from horse, to horse and wagon, to motorized vehicles, to airplanes, to landing a man on the moon in 1969."

The Stockdicks were one of the pioneering families of Katy and have left their footprint by way of schools, a general store, rice farming, and more



Photo by Juliana Evans

Rosanne Stockdick Lopez and her daughter Bethany Lopez Cobb are proud of their rice farming history

Building Katy Schools

“Education has turned out to be our family’s greatest legacy,” says Lopez. One of Adam’s sons, William Chester Stockdick, started the South Mayde School for children in 1905. About a decade later in 1914, he and A.J. Peek started the Stockdick School on Stockdick School Road. They also served as trustees. Both of these schools were only one-room buildings, but they offered an opportunity for children from the surrounding farms to get an education. The two schools closed in 1931 due to the availability of roads and buses from Katy ISD that were then able pick up students from the country and take them to school in town.

Other than helping to build some of the first schools in Katy, many of Stockdick’s descendants chose careers related to education through teaching, administration, and becoming school board members. Lopez’s daughter, Bethany Lopez Cobb, is a fifth-generation Stockdick who has taught in Katy ISD for more than a decade.

A Generational Story

As a child, Lopez’s life revolved around the farm. Her childhood days were spent on the family farm on Stockdick School Road because her dad was a rice farmer and cattleman. “Summers were always started with rice harvest. I drove a rice truck just as soon as my feet could reach the pedals and I could see over the steering wheel,” Lopez says.



Portrait of Adam Henry Stockdick, his wife Elmira, and their children in 1891

The Stockdick family has approximately 263 total combined years of teaching in Katy ISD



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Lopez also had responsibilities working with cattle. She called it her "cattle job," and it included working on a card catalogue of every cow, calf, and bull on the farm, helping fill syringes for inoculations, treating pink eye, and applying fly dust. "I remember as a young child when the roads in Katy were paved for the first time. I remember the farms finally getting telephone service. Our lives have literally seen the space age and the high-tech age come about," says Lopez. "What an amazing journey."

Business was always a way of life in the family. "Lives changed constantly due to bad weather affecting crops, injuries, death, tragedy, and aging. One did not have the opportunity to 'stop working' if you wanted to succeed at anything in life," says Lopez. She has juggled several career changes, somewhat like her ancestor, Adam. Lopez was originally a teacher, but when she moved to Katy in 1975, there were no job openings at Katy Elementary School, which was the only elementary school at the time. For the next 20 years, she and her dad worked together in the family business selling homes.

The business closed in 1994, and she and her husband opened ABC Country Store. Unfortunately, due to her husband's health, the store closed in June 2008. Now, Lopez is a dedicated substitute and tutor for Katy ISD. She is also on the Katy Heritage Society Board and prepares history presentations of the City of Katy for Katy ISD elementary schools.

Future Hopes

The Stockdick descendants agree that Katy's small-town feel with strong family cultures are what keeps the growing community strong. "This strong sense of established roots gives self-confidence to children. They learn early on to respect the elderly, appreciate their own history, and understand why they need to learn about history," Lopez says.

Katy is a wonderful place to raise a family, Cobb adds, "I want future generations to know that support and how it came to be because of all the generations before who worked hard and relied on each other."

As part of the older generation of Stockdicks, Lopez and her family are working to document the Stockdick family history. With a collection of letters, journals, and pictures, the family is able to piece together a more detailed family legacy for future generations. **KM**

WENDY TENG is a freelance writer. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, blogging, volunteering, trying new restaurants, and learning about new organizations.

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