

ROSE-BROWN-MAY NATURAL AREA

RIVER LEGACY PARKS

Rose-Brown-May Park was established in December 1976 through a 200-acre donation to the City of Arlington from sisters Berta Rose Brown and Margaret Leslie Rose May, descendants of Arlington pioneer James Gibbins. At that time, the donation of the original Gibbins family homestead was the largest single parcel of land ever donated to the City. It is now part of River Legacy Parks, the “crown jewel” of Arlington’s park system.

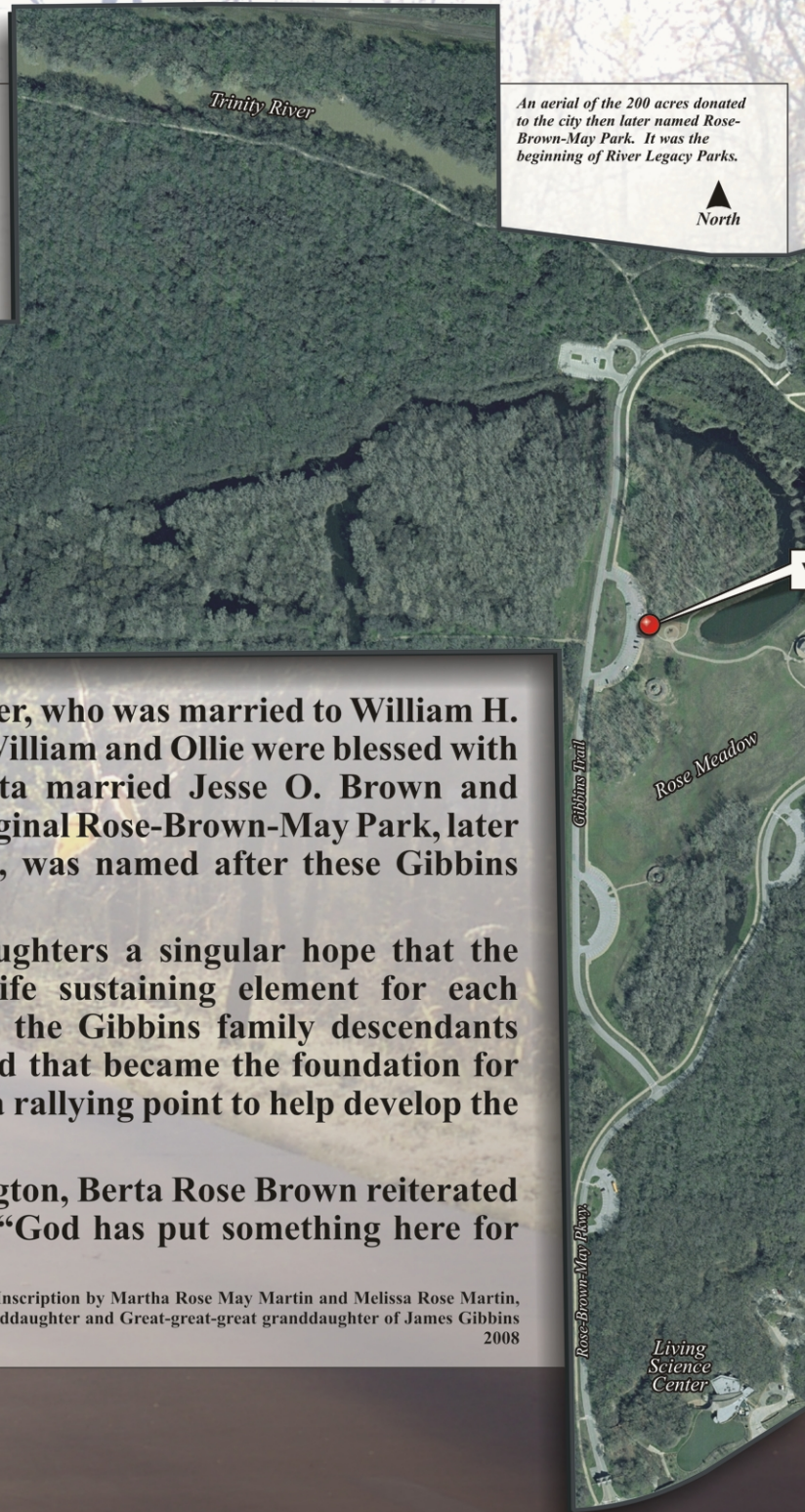
James Gibbins purchased 640 acres near the Trinity River in 1863. Upon his death in 1870, the land passed to his son, Thomas Jefferson Gibbins and wife Martha, who grew the farm to 1,359 acres. After the death of her husband in 1891, Martha managed the farm for another three decades. In 1923, Martha deeded the Gibbins

homestead to Ollie Gibbins Rose, her daughter, who was married to William H. Rose, Mayor of Arlington from 1919-1923. William and Ollie were blessed with two daughters, Berta and Margaret. Berta married Jesse O. Brown and Margaret married Thomas G. May. The original Rose-Brown-May Park, later changed to Rose-Brown-May Natural Area, was named after these Gibbins descendants.

Martha Gibbins often conveyed to her daughters a singular hope that the homestead property would “offer some life sustaining element for each generation to come.” It was this wish that the Gibbins family descendants honored in 1976 when they donated the land that became the foundation for River Legacy Parks. The land proved to be a rallying point to help develop the park space into what it is today.

On donating this acreage to the City of Arlington, Berta Rose Brown reiterated her grandmother’s words when she stated, “God has put something here for every generation.”

Inscription by Martha Rose May Martin and Melissa Rose Martin,
Great-great granddaughter and Great-great-great granddaughter of James Gibbins
2008



An aerial of the 200 acres donated to the city then later named Rose-Brown-May Park. It was the beginning of River Legacy Parks.



Berta Rose, circa 1919, standing in front of her grandmother’s home, Martha Gibbins



Berta Rose Brown, Ollie Gibbins Rose, and Margaret Leslie Rose May



NEW PARK AREA PROVIDED . . . Mr. and Mrs. J.O. Brown, left, open donated park property to Arlington Mayor Tom Vandergriff
- Star-Telegram Photo

Sign Provided by -

