

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Pioneer Woman Monument

Other name/site number: NA

Name of related multiple property listing: Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial

2. Location

Street & number: Pioneer Circle, Texas Woman's University

City or town: Denton

State: Texas

County: Denton

Not for publication: ☐

Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this

☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:

☐ national ☒ statewide ☐ local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D



Signature of certifying official / Title

State Historic Preservation Officer

3/6/18

Date

Texas Historical Commission

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other, explain: _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

<input type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

Category of Property

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
1	0	objects
1	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: RECREATION AND CULTURE: monument

Current Functions: RECREATION AND CULTURE: monument

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Other: Sculpture

Principal Exterior Materials: Stone/marble

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-6 through 7-7)

Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: Criterion F (Commemorative Properties)

Areas of Significance: Social History, Art

Period of Significance: 1938

Significant Dates: 1938

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Friedlander, Leo (sculptor), Piccirilli Brothers (carvers), Nelson, Donald S. (architect)

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 8-8 through 8-16)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 9-17 through 9-18)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- ☐ Other state agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 0.44 acres

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 33.132438°N Longitude: -97.74644°W

Verbal Boundary Description: The boundary includes a 0.44-acre oval parcel within the street, "Pioneer Circle" on the campus of Texas Woman's University.

Boundary Justification: The nomination includes the statue and landscaped grounds surrounding it as defined by the historic plans and current street configuration.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Bonnie Tipton Wilson, THC National Register Historian
Organization: Texas Historical Commission
Street & number: P.O. Box 12276
City or Town: Austin State: TX Zip Code: 78711-2276
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Date: November 1, 2017

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets Map-19 through Map-20)

Additional items (see continuation sheets Figure-21 through Figure-28)

Photographs (see continuation sheets Photo-29 through Photo-35)

Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Photograph Log

Pioneer Woman Monument
Denton, Denton County, Texas
Photographer: Bonnie Tipton Wilson
Date: May 18, 2017

Photo 1: West elevation—camera facing east

Photo 2: Inscription on west elevation—camera facing east

Photo 3: West elevation (detail)—camera facing east

Photo 4: Southwest oblique—camera facing northeast

Photo 5: South elevation—camera facing north

Photo 6: East elevation—camera facing west

Photo 7: Inscription on east elevation—camera facing west

Photo 8: North elevation—camera facing south

Photo 9: Northwest oblique—camera facing southeast

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Description

The *Pioneer Woman* monument is a 13-foot-tall white Georgia marble statuary figure atop a 6-foot base of the same material at its original location at Texas Woman's University (formerly Texas State College for Women) in Denton, Denton County, Texas. The monument depicts a plainly-dressed woman with her left foot stepping forward, symbolizing her journey westward. It is within an oval parcel surrounded by a circular drive between several historic-age university buildings on the west side of campus. The parcel is landscaped with trees, native bushes, and flowers. The Leo Friedlander-designed statue was dedicated in 1938 to commemorate 19th-century female pioneers for the 1936 Texas Centennial. It retains a high degree of integrity and is in good condition.

Denton is in north Texas, approximately 40 miles northwest of Dallas, near the center of Denton County. Texas Woman's University is approximately one mile north of the Denton County courthouse. The half-mile-long campus is bounded by East University Drive/U.S. Highway 377 (north), North Ruddell Street (east), Mingo Road and Texas Street (southeast and south), and Oakland Street (west).

Pioneer Woman is on a 0.44-acre oval-shaped parcel in the southwestern area of campus. A circular drive, Pioneer Circle, immediately borders the lot and intersects with Oakland Street. Several university buildings surround the nominated property: the Margo Jones Performance Hall (historically the Music and Speech Building) is north of the statue; Anne Stuart Science Complex (previously two buildings: Bralley Memorial Library and the Science Building) is east; and the TWU Arts Building (historically the Fine Arts Building) is south. *Pioneer Woman* faces west towards Oakland Street and the residential neighborhood that borders TWU's campus.

Pioneer Woman is a 19'-tall monument comprised of a 13' statue and 6' two-tiered base. It is made of Georgia white Cherokee marble that was quarried by the Georgia Marble Company in Pickens County, Georgia. Sculptor Leo Friedlander designed the figurative portion to memorialize 19th-century Texas pioneer women. The Piccirilli Brothers, of New York, carved Friedlander's design into marble and axed-finished it using a handheld masonry axe hammer to smooth its surface. *Pioneer Woman* is shown wearing homespun clothing—an ankle-length skirt and fitted jacket—with heavy brogan boots, and her hair pulled back at her neck. She is carved with her left arm held close against her torso, hand resting gently over heart, and her right arm hangs at her side. *Pioneer Woman* is depicted walking, the left foot forward as her eyes gaze westward. An irregularly-shaped cross section of marble rises under her feet between the statue and base.

Dallas-based architect Donald S. Nelson designed the structural base for the *Pioneer Woman* monument. The statue stands atop a horizontal 22-ton monolithic die that is 7.5' wide and has a depth of 10'. Its top is bevelled to accentuate forward movement. The base front measures 4' tall while the back is approximately 3.75' tall. The west (front) side of the monument base is inscribed as follows:

MARKING A TRAIL IN A PATHLESS WILDERNESS PRESSING
FORWARD WITH UNSWERVING COURAGE SHE MET EACH UNTRIED
SITUATION WITH A RESOURCEFULNESS EQUAL TO THE NEED.
WITH A GLAD HEART SHE BROUGHT TO HER FRONTIER FAMILY
HER HOMELANDS CULTURAL HERITAGE. WITH DELICATE SPIRITUAL
SENSITIVENESS SHE ILLUMINED THE DULLNESS OF ROUTINE
AND THE LONELINESS OF ISOLATION WITH BEAUTY AND WITH
LIFE ABUNDANT AND WITHAL SHE LIVED WITH CASUAL UN-
AWARENESS OF HER VALUE TO CIVILIZATION. SUCH WAS THE
PIONEER WOMAN THE UNSUNG SAINT OF THE NATIONS IMMORTALS.
- JESSE H. HUMPHRIES

Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

The east (back) side of the monument base is inscribed as follows:

ERECTED BY THE STATE OF TEXAS
1936 WITH FUNDS APPROPRIATED
BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO
COMMEMORATE ONE HUNDRED
YEARS OF TEXAS INDEPENDENCE

The ground-level tier is a 2-foot-tall “ring base,” so named because, rather than sit on top, it caps the foundation below. It extends 2 feet out from the base tier above it and measures 12x14 feet. *Pioneer Woman* is supported by a concrete monolithic slab and double capping foundation.

Although Nelson’s original design called for a reflecting pool and walkways to decorate the oval parcel immediately around the monument, no such landscaping was installed. Currently, the landscaping of the 0.44-acre parcel includes native trees, plants, and flowers. Box hedges and flowering plants obscure the ground-level base on all sides of the monument. A sidewalk begins at the west end of the parcel, surrounds the statue’s landscaping, and encourages pedestrian traffic to view the monument from all sides. It extends from the eastern side of the statue towards the Anne Stuart Science Complex. There are wooden benches to the north and south of the sidewalk.

Integrity

The *Pioneer Woman* Monument retains exceptional integrity and is in very good condition. It retains integrity of materials, design, and workmanship as there have been no changes or damage inflicted to the statue since its dedication. The workmanship of skilled marble carvers is evident in markings seen at close-range. The patina of the marble has naturally aged and hardened, showing more streaks of grey than it did originally. It retains integrity of location at its original site on the Texas Woman’s University campus. Although the surrounding university buildings have been modernized, the updates did not significantly alter each building façade. The neighborhood west of the statue remains primarily residential with some historic-age homes directly across from *Pioneer Woman*. The statue retains integrity of its setting on the campus and its association with the school. The statue conveys the feeling of a monumental figure designed to symbolize women. *Pioneer Woman* is a visible fixture at TWU, and the school has taken great care to preserve the statue for posterity.

Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Statement of Significance

Dedicated in December 1938, the *Pioneer Woman* monument on the campus of Texas State College for Women (now Texas Woman's University) in Denton, Texas was the only major Texas Centennial monument that recognized the historical contributions of Texas women.¹ Governor Pat M. Neff first proposed the statue to the Texas Legislature in March 1935, and it was later included in the final Centennial appropriation law. A state-appointed art jury initially chose sculptor William Zorach's nude interpretation of *Pioneer Woman*. The uproar their decision caused led the Centennial Commission to award the contract to New York sculptor Leo Friedlander (1888-1966) instead. Friedlander designed the 13-foot statue of a plainly-dressed pioneer woman, which was produced from Georgian marble by master stone carvers Piccirilli Brothers in their New York studio. *Pioneer Woman* is representative of Friedlander's classical figurative aesthetic during the height of his career, when he received commissions for prominent sculptures at the New York World's Fair, Rockefeller Center, and the Oregon State Capitol. The statute also reflects the skill of the Piccirilli brothers, nationally-significant stone carvers and sculptors renowned for their work on numerous high-profile landmarks, including New York's Washington Square Arch, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Architect Donald S. Nelson, who later earned regional acclaim for his building designs in Dallas and Waco, designed the 6-foot statuary base.

The property is nominated under Criterion A in the area of Social History and Criterion C in the area of Art at the state level of significance under the multiple property submission *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial* as a major project of the statewide effort to commemorate Texas history in the 1930s. The monument is significant in the area of Social History because its commission and placement at the university was the Centennial program's primary acknowledgement of women's contributions to Texas history, which were otherwise absent from the nearly 1,100 historical markers and monuments erected across the state. The statue was commissioned as part of a major Depression-era public arts project and is significant in the area of Art as an important work by master artists Leo Friedlander and the Piccirilli Brothers. The property meets Criterion Consideration F (Commemorative Properties) because it is significant as a work of art that reflects early 20th century interest in recognizing historic subjects throughout Texas, which culminated in the publicly-funded statewide Texas Centennial.

Texas Woman's University and Denton

Before the founding of the Girls' Industrial College (Texas Woman's University) in Denton in 1903, Texas women had few options for professional or industrial higher educational training. Careers for women were primarily limited to teaching and nursing, and subsequently, higher education institutions provided curriculum geared towards that certification.² The Texas Grange, an agrarian order, first proposed a vocational academy for rural girls in the early 1890s. Although their effort failed, women's voluntary organizations took up the campaign to establish a state industrial college for women.³

¹ The Commission of Control for Texas Centennial Celebration's 1938 report, *Monuments Erected by the State of Texas to Commemorate the Centenary of Texas Independence*, inventoried the buildings, structures, and objects that were built as part of the official state-sponsored Centennial program. It organized the projects by property type classifications and *Pioneer Woman* classified as a monument. The nomination will interchangeably refer to the nominated property as a statue (which it is) and a monument (its classification).

² Public co-educational institutions like Baylor University in Waco, Southwestern University in Georgetown, and the University of Texas in Austin offered female students a wide range of coursework—science, literature, math, art, and music, but only offered women certificates ("diplomas") rather than bachelor's degrees. Specialized teacher-training and nurse-training institutions developed in Texas in the 19th century to cater to the high demand for female nurses and educators. Many of these colleges were founded after 1890.

³ Judith N. McArthur and Harold L. Smith, *Texas Through Women's Eyes: The Twentieth-Century Experience* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010) 7-9; *Handbook of Texas Online*, Debbie Mauldin Cottrell, "Women and Education,"

Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

The Texas Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), with support of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs (TFCW) and the Texas Woman's Press Association, lobbied three biennial legislative sessions between 1897 and 1901 for an enabling law to establish a public industrial college for women. These groups believed vocational education provided an opportunity for women to professionalize their skills as mothers and homemakers to the benefit of society at large. In 1900, the WCTU and TFCW persuaded the Texas Democratic Party to include the Girls' Industrial College bill as part of its platform, and subsequently the 27th State Legislature authorized its founding in 1901.⁴

Thirty Texas towns vied for the new college, and an *Austin Daily Statesman* editor expressed surprise when Denton was chosen in 1902, "as it was thought that it would go to some larger place."⁵ Denton was established as the Denton County seat in 1857. Despite its proximity to Dallas and Fort Worth, it experienced several decades of slow growth. Its modern identity as a college town took root in 1890s when the Texas Normal College (University of North Texas) was founded. A thirteen-member committee chose to locate the Girls Industrial College in Denton because it exhibited an "environment of moral character and culture and refinement in the people." The small city offered the state a 60-acre site, \$25,000 towards construction, and importantly, it had passed a prohibition law.⁶ Girls Industrial College, a place of "domestic and industrial training of the most modern and practical type" opened in 1903. The college later changed its name to College of Industrial Arts (1905), then Texas State College for Women (1934), and finally Texas Woman's University (1957).

Pioneer Woman Monument

As Texans prepared to observe the 1936 Centennial, the 100-year anniversary of Texas independence from Mexico, Texas State College for Women (TSCW) undertook a campaign to improve the campus' built and natural landscape. Louis H. Hubbard, TSCW president, under directive by the TSCW Board of Regents, applied for Works Progress Administration (WPA) loans and grants to construct new instructional and dormitory facilities. By 1934, seven WPA-funded buildings were under construction or completed—Hygea Hall, Stoddard Hall, Stephen F. Austin Hall, Sam Houston Hall, the Science Building, the Fine Arts Building, and the Music and Speech Building. The undertaking included a campus beautification plan that resulted in the careful planting of hundreds of redbud trees and Texas wildflowers.⁷ Hubbard also dreamed of a small, non-sectarian chapel as a "haven for prayer and meditation," in one of the campus' new wildflower gardens, but the project was several years away from completion.

Hubbard was keenly aware of the historical and economic significance of the upcoming Centennial. He spoke on the topic at the April 1934 district meeting for the Texas Federation of Woman's Clubs in Fort Worth, and described the event as an "unparalleled opportunity" for marketing Texas industry and self-reflective inspiration through commemoration.⁸ The university president undoubtedly believed women played an integral role in the history of Texas progress when he said, "no one can take pride in the Texas of today without giving thought to the pioneers."⁹

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/khwku> (accessed September 13, 2017); Judith N. McArthur, *Creating the New Woman: The Rise of Southern Women's Progressive Culture in Texas, 1893-1918* (Chicago: The University of Illinois Press, 1998), 35; Phyllis Bridges, *Marking a Trail: The Quest Continues, A Centennial History of Texas Woman's University* (Denton: Texas Woman's University Printing Services, 2001), 1.

⁴ McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 37; *Handbook of Texas Online*, Joyce Thompson, "Texas Woman's University," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/kct37> (accessed September 13, 2017).

⁵ "Denton Secured the Girls Industrial School," *Austin Daily Statesman*, February 5, 1902.

⁶ "Lake Area Residents May Get Vote on Beer Sale," *Denton Record-Chronicle*, April 4, 1965.

⁷ Bridges, "Louis Herman Hubbard," in *Marking a Trail*, 24.

⁸ "Hubbard Addresses Federated Clubs," *The Lasso*, April 12, 1934, TWU Libraries Woman's Collection, Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX.

⁹ *Ibid.*

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Governor Pat M. Neff first proposed “a monument to pioneer mothers to be ‘fashioned out of Texas granite by Texas hands, and to tower above every other Texas monument,’” at a joint session of the Texas Legislature on March 2, 1935, on the state’s 99th anniversary.¹⁰ However, TSCW Board of Regents minutes stated its origin came from “within this institution,” and in 1935 Hubbard actively pursued a Centennial monument for the campus.¹¹ In March 1935, the Senate Finance Committee of the Texas Legislature met to debate amendments to the proposed for the 1936 Texas Centennial appropriation bill. Senator Grady Woodruff, whose district included Denton, moved to include “a monument to pioneer women...to be placed on the College of Industrial Arts [TSCW] campus.” The committee accepted Woodruff’s proposal on the condition that he remove the specified location from the bill. Woodruff consented knowing TSCW, and other applicants, would have a later opportunity to request the statue.¹² The enacting legislation, passed in April 1935, itemized commemorative projects and earmarked an unspecified amount for a memorial to “pioneer womanhood.”¹³

In June 1935, TSCW Board of Regents drafted a resolution to request that the State award the statue to pioneer women to the university. A TSCW delegation, which included Hubbard and Senator Woodruff, presented it at a public meeting of the Centennial Commission’s Advisory Board of Historians in Austin. They argued:

In view of the fact that the nearly 2,000 students of the college come from every portion of the state, the erection of the [*Pioneer Woman*] on the campus will serve the women of the entire state, and will inspire their daughters to continued reference for the heroism and sacrifice of the pioneer women of the past who helped to make the Texas of the present.¹⁴

Other cities also competed for the statue, and the Advisory Board of Historians ultimately recommended the Centennial Commission locate the *Pioneer Woman* statue in Austin.¹⁵ It was a temporary setback for TSCW and Hubbard confessed frustration at their decision, calling the process “a political game.”¹⁶ His comment suggested the process was more complicated than the historical record reveals. Politics was on Hubbard’s side, and in October 1935 Senator Woodruff and Representative Bullock Hyder convinced the Centennial Commission to overrule the advisory board and select TSCW as the monument’s future site.¹⁷

The Texas State Board of Control, an agency that handled contracts for the Centennial Commission, managed the process for planning and erecting all public art for the centenary. They announced an open competition for Centennial

¹⁰ “Neff Proposes Monument for Pioneer Mother,” *The Austin American*, March 3, 1935.

¹¹ Similar-themed statues were erected between 1918 and 1930 across the U.S. The earliest known is one half of Leo Lentelli’s *Sullivan Gates* (1918), in Denver. The National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution erected 12 statues, each called “Madonna of the Trail,” between Maryland and California in 1929. In Ponca City Oklahoma, oilman E.W. Marland sponsored a nationwide sculptural competition which resulted in that town’s own *Pioneer Woman* statue. Bryant Baker, the winner of the competition, also designed the *Benjamin Milam* Centennial statue in Cameron. TSCW Board of Regents, Board of Regents Minutes, June 3, 1935, Book 32, p 44. Texas Woman’s University Archives. “Women Paid Tribute by Former Governor Neff as Statue Unveiled at S.C.W.,” *Denton Record-Chronicle*, December 6, 1938.

¹² “Committee Votes Yes on Centennial; Will Rewrite Bill,” *Dallas Morning News*, March 19, 1935.

¹³ *General and Special Laws of Texas*, Forty-Fourth Legislature, Regular Session, January 8, 1935 to May 11, 1935; 1:427-37.

¹⁴ TSCW Board of Regents, Board of Regents Minutes, June 3, 1935, Book 32, p 44. Texas Woman’s University Archives.

¹⁵ Delegations from Huntsville and Austin represent two known groups that vied for *Pioneer Woman*, and the newspapers recalled “stiff competition,” among other candidates which suggest that more cities were in the running. [Untitled], *Denton Record-Chronicle*, October 21, 1935, 1. Advisory Board of Historians, *Reports of the Advisory Board of Texas Historians to the Commission of Control for Texas Centennial Celebrations; Majority and Minority Reports*, October 7, 1935, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

¹⁶ Hubbard to J. Frank Dobie, October 10, 1935 Dobie Papers, Ransom Center University of Texas, Austin.

¹⁷ “Grant Received for Tribute to Pioneer Women,” *The Lasso*, Oct. 24, 1935. [Untitled], *Denton Record-Chronicle*, October 21, 1935, 1.

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public art contracts at the Capitol in April 1936 where sculptors competed for several classes of memorials, including the “pioneer woman of Texas.”¹⁸ A seven-member jury of art professionals, appointed by the Centennial Commission, judged the artistic merits of models and presented the state its recommendations.¹⁹ From twelve submissions, the jury unanimously chose sculptor William Zorach’s plaster model for *Pioneer Woman*. His interpretation depicted four nude figures, a pioneer family, modestly posed. Juror Evaline Sellors commented the arrangement was “wonderfully suggestive of the thought that pioneer life centered about the woman.”²⁰ However, when the jury’s choice for a nude statue at an all-female college went public, news writers and editorial commentators had a field day.

The sensationalism of “the nude pioneer woman controversy” was fodder for newspapers which published emphatic protests from the public, state officials, and even fellow artists. The vocal opposition to Zorach’s statue questioned its historical accuracy and, more importantly, its propriety. Centennial Commission Chairman Walter F. Woodul assured the public there would be no nude statue adding, “those little girls at Denton aren’t going to have to look at such a thing.”²¹ One student responded to Woodul’s impression of the student body in the *Dallas Morning News*, saying “We are grown women up here... and certainly we are old enough and educated enough to form our own opinions about nude art.”²² Even after the artist consented to cloth the family, the TSCW Board of Regents formally rejected Zorach’s statue. The controversy ended abruptly when the U.S. Texas Centennial Commission separately decided to fund the public art project from its \$3 million federal allocation, and denied all previous recommendations by the art jury.²³

In October 1937, the Centennial Commission committed to personally oversee the second attempt to choose a sculptor and design for the public art project.²⁴ The process that did not receive much fanfare, and within six months they approved New York sculptor Leo Friedlander’s second design for a monument to female pioneers. The first version (Figure 5) may not have been conservative enough for the commission, and the final version shows a modestly-dressed woman in homespun clothes and boots. Friedlander’s commission required him to work with a state-approved architect to plan the statuary base, and the Board of Control hired Dallas architect Donald S. Nelson for the work.

Hubbard met with Friedlander and Nelson at TSCW in May 1938 to discuss their plans for the monument and its site location. The Board of Regents chose to locate the statue on the oval parcel between three new buildings: the Fine Arts Building, Bralley Memorial Library, and the Music Hall. In keeping with the campus beautification project, they envisioned the memorial as the centerpiece to a formal French, what they called “La Norte,” landscape design.²⁵

¹⁸ Twelve sculptors are said to have submitted models for the *Pioneer Woman*, two known artists were Texans Waldine Tauch and Bonnie MacLeary.

¹⁹ The Board of Control assembled the panel of art jurors from associated contacts working for the central exposition in Dallas. Its members included: Evaline Sellors, Fort Worth artist and art teacher; J.C. Hall, a San Antonio attorney; Richard Foster Howard, director of the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts; Goldwin Goldsmith, Austin architect; James Chillman, Jr., art professor and director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Mary Marshall, artist; and Edmund Kinzinger, chairman of the Baylor University Art Department.

²⁰ “Nude Statue Fight Plopped in the Lap of U.S. Commission,” *Dallas Morning News*, April 5, 1936.

²¹ “Chairman Woodul Insists Nude Art Banned for Girls,” *Dallas Morning News*, April 9, 1936.

²² “From Denton Girls,” *Dallas Morning News*, April 16, 1936.

²³ “Nude Statue Fight Plopped in the Lap of U.S. Commission,” *Dallas Morning News*, April 5, 1936. “Garner May Get Nude Group Row,” *Austin Statesman*, April 6, 1936.

²⁴ The second attempt to commission artists for Centennial public art included input by a new Centennial Arts Committee, chaired by former Texas Governor Pat Neff, and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts. Both entities submitted a list of American sculptors to the Texas State Board of Control. The Board of Control solicited models from artists on that list and worked with the Commission of Control to approve designs for monuments and statues. TSCW Board of Regents, Board of Regents Minutes, October 3, 1936, Book 34, p 4. Texas Woman’s University Archives. “Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial,” NRHP Multiple Property Document Form, 2018.

²⁵ The “La Norte” style noted by the *Denton Record-Chronicle* likely refers to 17th-century landscape architect André Le Nôtre, King Louis XIV of France’s principle gardener. His most notable work is the park at the Palace of Versailles which showcases his

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Nelson's blueprint for *Pioneer Woman* included a drawing of the statue base surrounded by a reflecting pool and walkways. TSCW's request for a state deficiency appropriation to cover costs for Nelson's elaborate plan was denied, and no alternative landscape design was implemented.

As nationally-recognized artists worked on *Pioneer Woman*, it was during this period that Hubbard and the Board of Regents moved forward with his dream to build a chapel on campus, and called on TSCW fine arts students to decorate its interior. With the help of private donations and student-raised funds, TSCW hired architects O'Neil Ford and Arch B. Swank to design, what came to be called, the Little-Chapel-in-the-Woods (1939). National Youth Administration trainees constructed the modest-sized building out of native grey field stone quarried nearby. Considered one of Ford's finest works, it was built around a series of parabolic arches with student-designed stained-glass windows in the bays that illustrated scenes of women serving society in various roles. All interior art—metal light fixtures, mosaics, stencils, and some textiles—were designed, and in some cases built, by students and faculty.²⁶

Jesse H. Humphries, an associate dean at the college, was the only TSCW-connected person to contribute to the *Pioneer Woman* when she wrote the inscription for its base. Importantly, it is the only Centennial property with an inscription publicly attributed to a female author.²⁷ The Advisory Board of Historians, "experts" for Centennial history programming, wrote all marker and monument marker text to ensure historical accuracy. Given the *Pioneer Woman* monument was an allegorical, not historical, figure the Board of Control gave TSCW the task of writing it. Hubbard selected his trusted colleague, Humphries, "because of her extraordinary good taste in everything that she wrote" and because he believed her to be a modern pioneer in the field of education.²⁸

As dedication day approached in Winter 1938, two years after the Centennial, TSCW's *Lass-O* editors commented that "it takes longer to make a dress of stone than of cloth."²⁹ After Friedlander designed the statue at his studio in White Plains, New York, he contracted with the Piccirilli Brothers, also of New York, to carve the piece from white Georgia marble. The stone sculpture and base arrived via train to Denton in the first week of December 1938. Crowds of students eagerly watched Friedlander and Nelson supervise the Llano Marble Company, a Texas branch of the Georgia Marble Company, install the long-awaited *Pioneer Woman* in the circle parcel on campus.³⁰

On December 6, 1938, former Governor Pat M. Neff dedicated the statue before a crowd of 3,500. It was officially unveiled by Mrs. John A. Hann, an 89-year-old Denton pioneer, and student helpers. Those who spoke expressed hope that future TSCW students would perpetuate the noble ideals and character of the symbolic pioneer woman. *Pioneer Woman* even captured the attention of Eleanor Roosevelt. In her daily column, "My Day," Roosevelt praised the statue's inscription and observed, "women will be recognized by history, but today we forget them." *Pioneer Woman* was erected to honor women's historical achievements, and Roosevelt hoped the Centennial statue would remind modern Texans of the unnoticed and unsung contributions women make to society every day.³¹

symmetrical arrangement of walkways, reflecting pools, and garden beds. "Landscaping for Statue to Pioneer Woman is Underway," *Denton Record-Chronicle* Jan 20, 1938.

²⁶ Mary Carolyn Hollers George, *O'Neil Ford, Architect*, College Station, TX: A&M University Press, 1992, 53-58.

²⁷ Four women worked for the Advisory Board of Historians researching and writing inscriptions for Centennial markers and monuments. It is unclear how many they wrote, and no public acknowledgement was given to their contributions. "Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial," NRHP Multiple Property Document Form, 2018.

²⁸ Louis Hubbard, [Denton, ?], Texas Woman's University Archive.

²⁹ "Pioneer Memorial," *The Lass-O*, August 8, 1938.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Eleanor Roosevelt, "My Day," August 13, 1942, The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, <https://www2.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/> (accessed September 29, 2017).

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Leo Friedlander (1888-1966)

Leo Friedlander was born in New York City on July 6, 1888 to German Jewish immigrant parents.³² As a teenager, his innate artistic talent awarded him an apprenticeship under the Klee Brothers whose New York shop produced architectural ornaments. Working closely with architects fundamentally shaped his approach to sculpture-making and he viewed all his pieces as an contributing element within a building or landscape. He pursued formal training at the Ecoles de Beaux Arts from 1908 to 1911. In 1913, he won the prestigious Prix de Rome scholarship to study at the American Academy in Rome. As an assistant to sculptor Paul Manship, Friedlander established his reputation as a noteworthy sculptor in the 1920s. His own commissions during this period were for ecclesiastical sculpture, and these works reflect his early adherence to decorative and classical-inspired forms.³³

Friedlander's work creating public monuments and ornamental sculpture for notable architects earned him widespread public appeal in the 1930s, and the period marked the height of his career. Within this context he created *Pioneer Woman* for the Texas Centennial. Works from this period demonstrate his stylistic evolution in which his classical figurative aesthetic shifted towards more simplified monumental figures that conveyed heroic themes. Friedlander's portrait figures displayed exaggerated, yet recognizable, body forms that were conservative enough to earn popular favor. In 1929, he was awarded the commission for *The Arts of War*, a pair of colossal bronze equestrian groups called *Valor* and *Sacrifice*, that flank the Arlington Memorial Bridge in Washington D.C. He designed two massive high-relief marble groups, *Lewis and Clark* and *Covered Wagon* (1934), to line the entrance of the Oregon State Capitol. Like *Pioneer Woman*, it is likely he hired professional carvers to produce his design from stone. The north and south entrances to Rockefeller Center in New York City are adorned with Friedlander's high-relief depictions of *Radio* and *Television*; these showcase his expertise at producing architectural sculpture. The artist then created four 33-foot-tall figures, called *The Four Freedoms*, for the central esplanade at the 1939 New York World's Fair. His tribute to the New England puritan *Roger Williams* (1939) in Providence, Rhode Island is another prominent example of his public art commissions.³⁴

Friedlander moved his studio from New York City to White Plains, New York in 1935. The new building provided him spacious living quarters and its 35-foot studio ceilings accommodated his large-scale sculptural art. Built in 1908 by Ricardo Bertelli, owner of the Roman Bronze Company, the classically-inspired stucco building had been previously used by sculptors Karl Illava and Henry Shrady. Friedlander occupied the home until his death in 1966 and he produced his most notable works, including *Pioneer Woman*, in the studio. In 1982, the Leo Friedlander Studio was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³⁵ Friedlander received few commissions in the 1940s, but there was a resurgence of demand for his work in the 1950s. *Pioneer Woman*, created in 1938, was commissioned during a period of high interest in Friedlander's work, and its form is demonstrative of his particular design style. It is said he aimed for his sculpture to be "an accurate expression of the mood of his time."³⁶ As *Pioneer Woman* is more conservative in its representation of the female figure than other works from the same period, it is thought he produced a sculptural symbol appropriate to the taste and mood of Texas citizens and TSCW.

³² There are discrepancies as to the date of Friedlander's birth year in various biographical sketches. On Friedlander's 1907 U.S. passport application he identifies his date of birth as July 6, 1888. *U.S. Passport Applications, 1795-1925* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2007.

³³ Rosenkranz, Joel. *Sculpture on a Grand Scale: Works from the Studio of Leo Friedlander*. Syracuse: Salina Press, 1984, 1-4.

³⁴ Ibid., 5-14.

³⁵ "Leo Friedlander Studio," White Plains, New York, National Register of Historic Places, 1982.

³⁶ Rosenkranz, 16.

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Piccirilli Brothers

The Piccirilli Brothers were a family of nationally-significant master stone carvers and sculptors who immigrated from Tuscany, Italy to New York City in 1888. Giuseppe Piccirilli (1844-1910) began his sculpting career in Massa Carrara, Italy where the principle industry centered on the Carrara marble quarries. Although himself a trained sculptor, Giuseppe's primary income came from carving other artist's designs. His sons Attilio, Furio, Masaniello ("Tom"), Orazio ("Horatio"), and Getulio inherited their father's artistic capabilities and subsequently ran the family business.³⁷ In Italy, they faced economic hardship and direct competition with other local carvers. The Piccirilli's immigrated to New York City in 1888, after a brief stay in London, and set up their studio in the Bronx in 1890.³⁸ From this location the brothers carved their most high-profile commissions and the *Pioneer Woman* statue.

The Piccirilli's offered American sculptors a quality of craftsmanship and marble that was previously only available in France and Italy. Artists, like Friedlander, who lacked the technical ability to carve marble, contracted with the family to transcribe clay models into stone. The Piccirilli Brothers' process involved marking a maquette (model) with a series of points and, using a machine, they copied the points onto a block of marble. Holes were then drilled into the stone to a prescribed depth at each point, and the brothers worked together to cut away the marble until it showed the same design as its model. The final stage involved finishing the surface to the artists' desired texture.³⁹ The Piccirilli Brothers were particularly adept at translating original designs into sculpture, and were sought out by nationally-significant artists, like Daniel Chester French. Although they were well-respected by contemporaries, the prestige of the artists they worked with often overshadowed their own accomplishments.

For five decades, the brothers collaborated on stone-carving projects that included numerous high-profile landmarks, like New York's Washington Square Arch (1895), Lincoln Memorial (1921), and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (1931). They also sculpted works from architect-drawn designs. *The Ladies* (1912), four colossal bronze and copper groups that adorn the corners of the now-called John Minor Wisdom Fifth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in New Orleans, a National Historic Landmark-listed building, is an example of their sculptural artistry. Each grouping features four sculpted figures—*History*, *Industry*, *Agriculture*, and *Arts*—seated around an armillary sphere. It is difficult to narrow the height of the Piccirilli Brothers' careers to a particular time period, but most of their commissions were completed between 1910 and 1935.⁴⁰ *Pioneer Woman* was completed outside of this time frame when the brothers were well-seasoned craftsmen. Attilio and Furio were also distinguished sculptors in their own right.⁴¹ In 1937, Attilio's name was recommended to the Texas State Board of Control for a Centennial statue commission, which he received for the *Richard Ellis* in Waxahachie. After the deaths of Getulio and Attilio in 1945, the remaining brothers closed their Bronx studio and quietly retired.⁴²

Donald S. Nelson (1907-1992)⁴³

Dallas architect Donald S. Nelson's contribution to the *Pioneer Woman* and the Centennial public art project is overshadowed by his later accomplishments. Nelson was born in Chicago, Illinois on February 10, 1907. His formal training began at age 19 at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Fontainebleau, France. Upon his return stateside, he earned a

³⁷ Two of Giuseppe's children did not work for the family business: his oldest son, Ferruccio, and daughter, Iole. Josef Vincent Lombardo, *Piccirilli: Life of an American Sculptor* (New York: Pittman Publishing Corp., 1944.)7-9.

³⁸ Lombardo, 277-282.

³⁹ Lombardo, 56.

⁴⁰ When the Piccirilli Brothers' studio closed in 1945, the property was sold and demolished. Their records that chronicled the scope and breadth of their many commissions were also destroyed.

⁴¹ Lombardo, 278-281; "Attilio Piccirilli, Sculptor, 77, Dies," *The New York Times*, October 9, 1945.

⁴² "H. Piccirilli, 82, Retired Sculptor Last of Family Concern Dies," *The New York Times*, June 29, 1954.

⁴³ Section adapted from *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial*, 23-24.

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bachelor of architecture degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). After winning the prestigious Paris Prize, Nelson returned to France in 1927 to attend the Ecole Normal Supérieur des Beaux Arts. The young architect began his professional career in 1930 working as a junior member of the Chicago firm Bennett, Parsons, and Frost.⁴⁴

Nelson's work for the 1933 Chicago Century of Progress Exposition earned him the attention of Dallas architect George Dahl who invited Nelson, among others, in 1935 to assist in the design of the Texas Centennial Exposition complex. When the project concluded in 1936, Nelson remained in Dallas and established a private practice. He responded to the State Board of Control's open call for an architect to design bases for Centennial statues and monuments. Nelson won the contract and, between 1936 and 1939, he collaborated with commissioned sculptors, monument makers, stone quarries, and local communities to plan and execute 24 public art projects. He later recalled that working with artists for the Centennial was as a "significant opportunity," and he was proud to help preserve for posterity great Texans and great events into sculpture.⁴⁵

Following World War II, Nelson entered the height of his professional career when he formed an architectural firm with Thomas D. Broad (Broad and Nelson) in Dallas. Nelson became a regionally-significant architect known for adding sculptural elements to his projects. No doubt his early career working with Centennial monuments introduced him to sculptors, like Raoul Jossset, and influenced his architectural aesthetic. He designed many public and commercial buildings across the state, and is recognized for several noteworthy buildings in Dallas and Waco. These projects include: the Dallas Mercantile Bank Complex (1940-1947), a contributing building in the Downtown Dallas Historic District; the Texas Memorial Grand Lodge Temple in Waco (1950); the original passenger terminal at Love Field in Dallas (1957); and the Scottish Rite Library and Museum in Waco (1969).⁴⁶

Conclusion

Without the specific allocation for a pioneer woman monument, it is unclear if or how the Centennial program would have chosen to commemorate Texas women. Few of the historically-significant individuals recommended by the Advisory Board of Historians to honor with Centennial public art were female. In one letter between the group, the advisory chairman suggested a majority of the board favored eliminating the statue to pioneer women altogether.⁴⁷ Without the enacting Centennial legislation which appropriated funds specifically for the project, it might not have had enough support to be completed. In addition to *Pioneer Woman*, two small Centennial monuments depict a female figure. However, these women are distinguished as wives rather than heroic individuals.⁴⁸ Ultimately, the Centennial recognized Texas women as supporters, not instigators, of Texas independence. Their significance is defined on numerous historical markers by their roles as daughters, wives, and mothers of "great men." Of the more than 1,100

⁴⁴ *Handbook of Texas Online*, Christopher Long, "Nelson, Donald Siegfried," accessed September 01, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fnejz>.

⁴⁵ "Donald S. Nelson, Architect, Receives NSS Medal," *National Sculpture Review* 22, no.3 (1973): 19.

⁴⁶ *Handbook of Texas Online*, Christopher Long, "Nelson, Donald Siegfried," accessed September 01, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fnejz>.

⁴⁷ Louis W. Kemp to J. Frank Dobie, September 18, 1935. Louis W. Kemp Papers, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Austin.

⁴⁸ Two small monuments, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Van Zandt in Canton and the Crosby County monument in Crosbyton, feature women in figurative relief sculpture. Centennial historical markers and grave markers call out women in relation to prominent men, as first Anglo settlers to historic communities, or as victims of Native American raids on white settlements. Historian Light T. Cummins' 2011 article in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, "From Midway to the Hall of State at Fair Park: Two Competing View of Women at the Dallas Celebration of 1936," examines women's roles in Centennial planning, marketing, and its execution. Although many women contributed to the success of the centenary, their historical and contemporary contributions were obscured by the work of men.

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properties eventually erected for the Centennial, *Pioneer Woman* was the only major monument to recognize the female contribution to Texas history.

The *Pioneer Woman* monument is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Social History and Criterion C in the area of Art at the state level of significance under the multiple property submission *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial*. It represents one of the major projects of the state-directed effort to commemorate Texas history in the 1930s, and its commission was the Centennial program's primary acknowledgment of women's contributions to state history. *Pioneer Woman* is an excellent example of the Centennial public art program and is significant in the area of Art as an important work by master sculptors Leo Friedlander and the Piccirilli Brothers. The property also meets Criterion Consideration F (Commemorative Properties) because it is significant as a work of art that reflects early 20th century interest in recognizing historic subjects throughout Texas, which culminated in the publicly-funded statewide Texas Centennial. The period of significance is 1938, the year the statue was erected.

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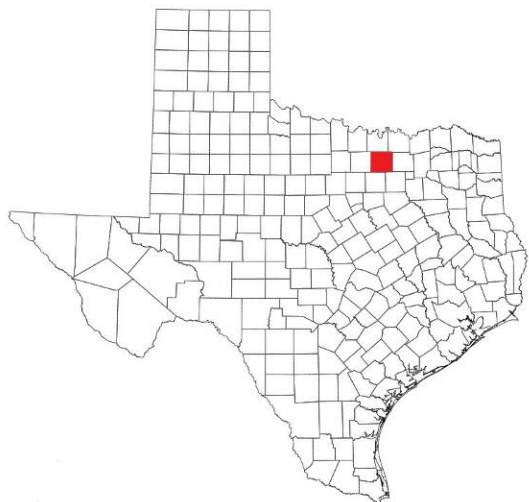
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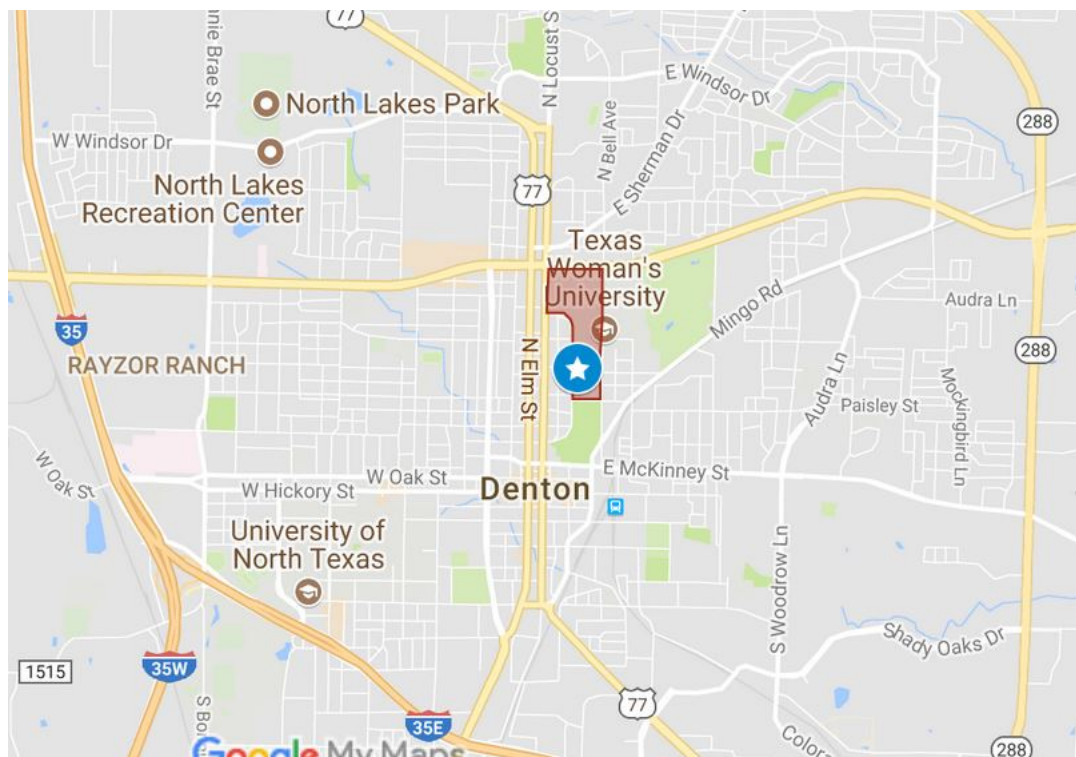
Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Maps

Map 1: Denton County, Texas

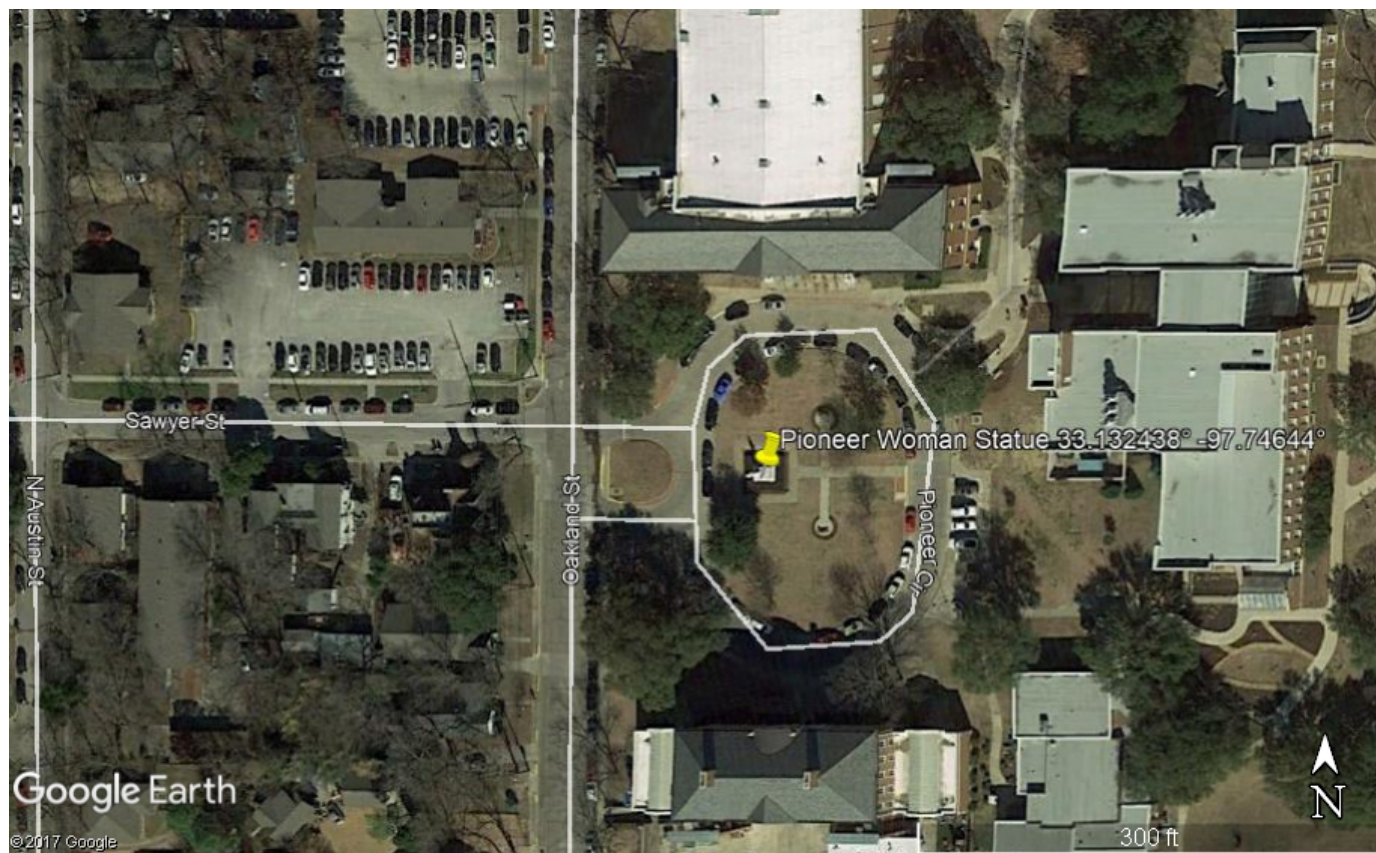


Map 2: Denton, TX. Google Maps. Accessed September 5, 2017. Texas Woman's University historic campus footprint in red; the star indicates the location of the *Pioneer Woman* statue.



Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Map 3: Texas Woman's University (TWU) campus. Google Maps. Accessed August 15, 2017.
Lat: 33.132438° Long: -97.74644°

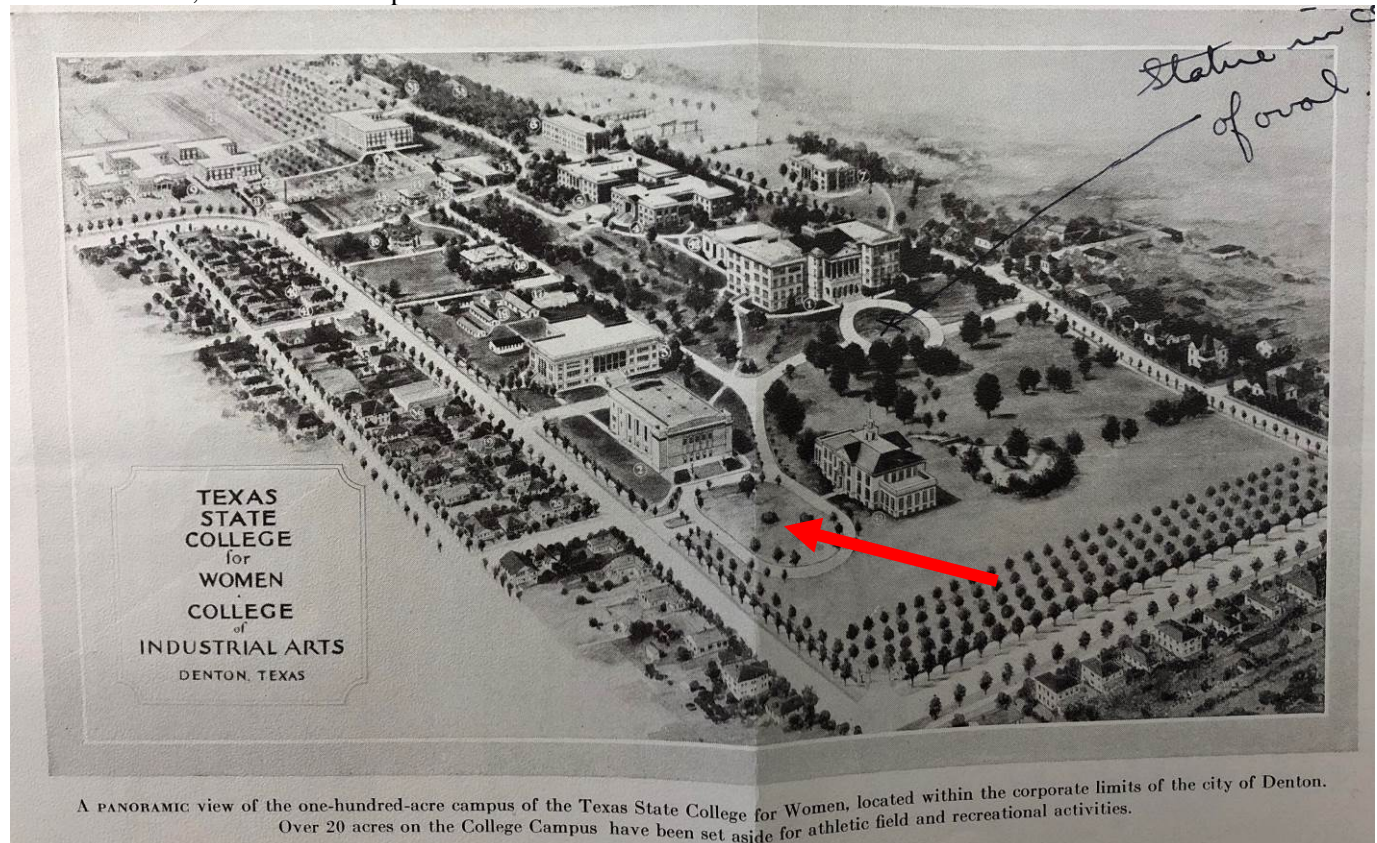


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Figures

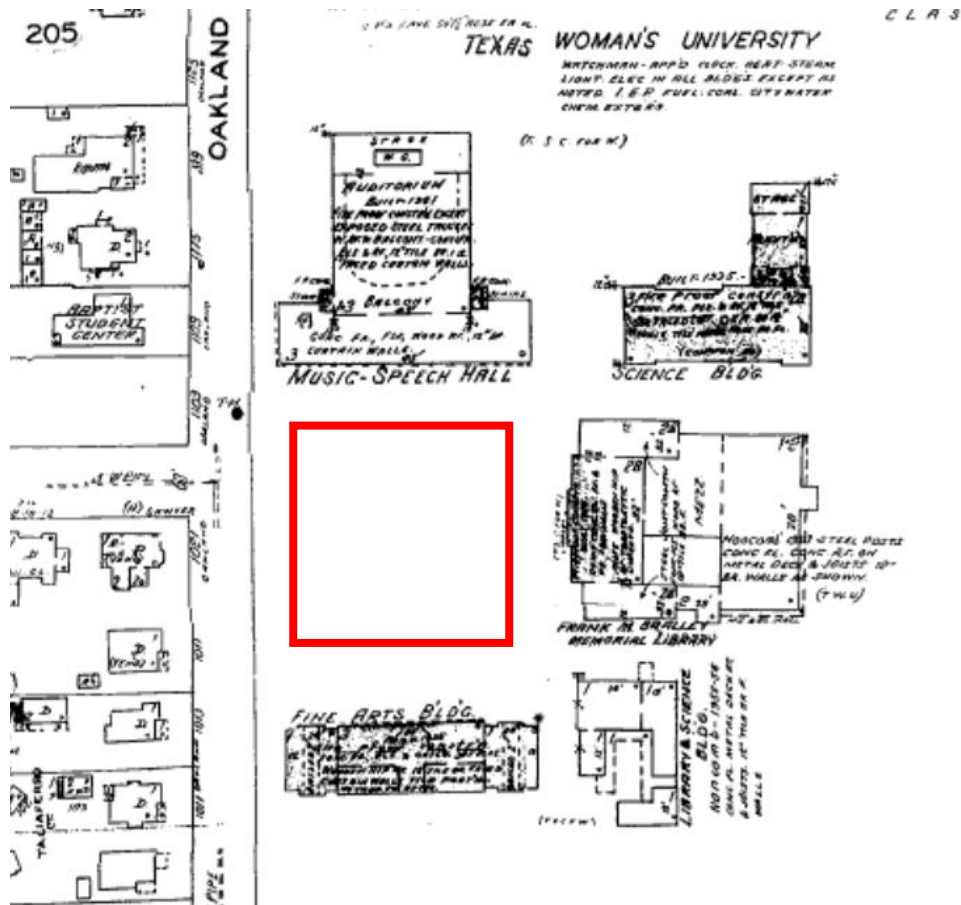
Figure 1: Rendering of future building placement on TWU's campus in 1934, arrow pointing to future site of *Pioneer Woman*. Hubbard wrote "statue in center of oval," in front of the Main Building where the board first wanted to place the statue.

Source: *The Lasso*. July 12, 1934. Courtesy of the TWU Libraries Woman's Collection, Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX. Red arrow points to actual location of monument.



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Figure 2: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1949. Statue and circle drive not shown, but the red box indicates its location.
Source: <http://sanborn.umi.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/tx/8499/dateid-000009.htm?CCSI=985n>



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Figure 3: William Zorach's proposed model for *Pioneer Woman*, 1935.

Source: Courtesy of the TWU Libraries Woman's Collection, Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX.



WILLIAM ZORACH: MODEL FOR MONUMENT TO PIONEER WOMEN

The Center of Controversy in Texas. See "Field Note" on Page 413.

Figure 4: Clipping from *Harrisburg Telegraph* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania), April 6, 1936.

Source: www.newspapers.com (Accessed August 16, 2017)

**PIONEERS IN NUDE
AROUSING ARTISTIC
SENSES OF TEXANS**

Austin, Tex., April 6. — A committee on art, with the task of choosing a model for a Texas centennial statue, has dropped the mere hint of a pioneer woman striding across the plains in the nude and it has an argument on its hands — "symbolism" and "the abstract" notwithstanding.

out a replica of grandma or Great-aunt Agatha and put her in an alpaca frock and sunbonnet?"

From across the way came a rumble: "Pioneer Texas doubtless would have hanged to the nearest tree any family going around nude like that group."

This is the second row on art to

Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Figure 5: Initial model for *Pioneer Woman* proposed by Friedlander to the Commission of Control.
Source: Courtesy of the TWU Libraries Woman's Collection, Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX.



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Figure 6: Final model accepted by the Commission of Control, 1937.

Source: Courtesy of the TWU Libraries Woman's Collection, Texas Woman's University, Denton, TX.



Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

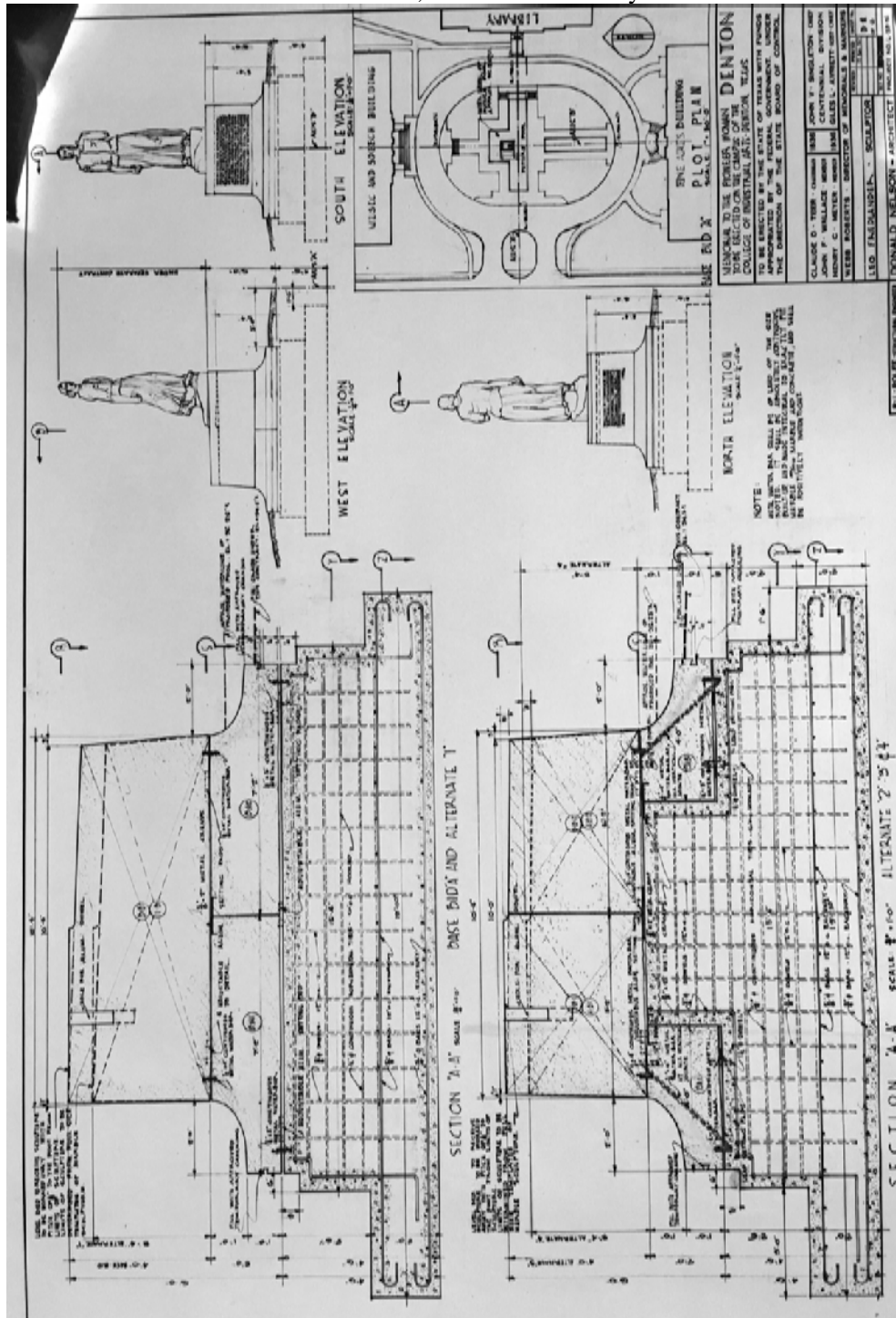
Figure 7: Leo Friedlander with *Pioneer Woman* Monument, n.d.

Source: "Donald S. Nelson, Architect, Receives NSS Medal," *National Sculpture Review* 22, no. 3 (1973): 19.



Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Figure 8: Blueprint "Base Bid 'A.'" Donald Nelson showing base, statue, and proposed landscape design.
Source: Texas Woman's University Pioneer Woman Memorial, Blueprints and drawings collection. Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.



Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Figure 9: Dedication, December 6, 1938.

Source: Courtesy of the TWU Libraries Woman's Collection, Texas Woman's University, Denton.

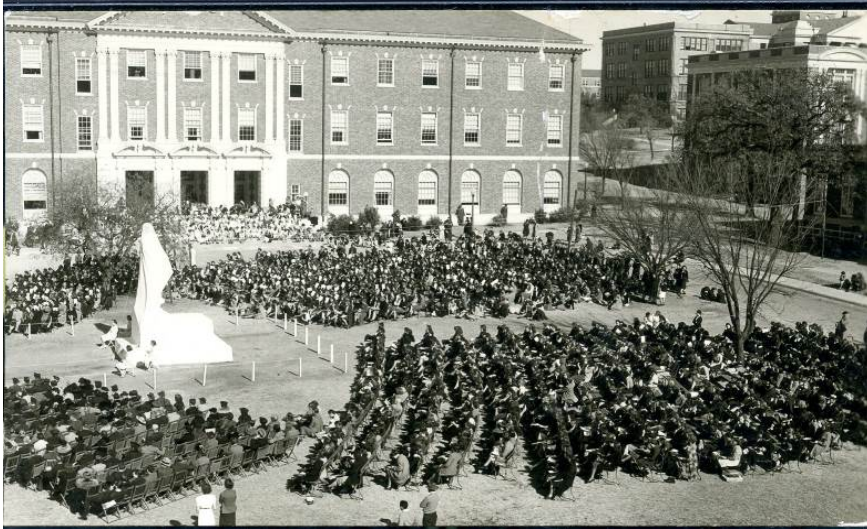


Figure 10: Dedication, December 6, 1938.

Source: Courtesy of the TWU Libraries Woman's Collection, Texas Woman's University, Denton.



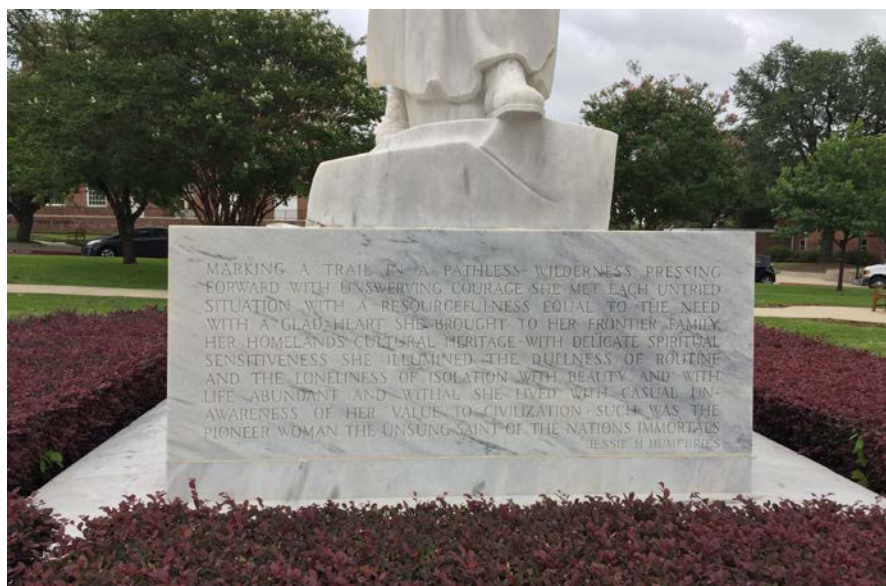
Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Photographs

Photo 1: West elevation—camera facing east



Photo 2: Inscription on west elevation—camera facing east



Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Photo 3: West elevation (detail)—camera facing east



Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Photo 4: Southwest oblique—camera facing northeast



Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Photo 5: South elevation—camera facing north



Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Photo 6: East elevation—camera facing west



Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Photo 7: Inscription on east elevation—camera facing west



Photo 8: North elevation—camera facing south



Pioneer Woman Monument, Denton, Denton County, Texas

Photo 9: Northwest oblique—camera facing southeast



~end~