Anna T. Jordan

Anna Elizabeth Toliver Jordan, educator and civic leader. Born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana on October 4, 1886. She was the daughter of Jackson Toliver and Sara Hood Toliver. She attended Mount Mirah Elementary School, The Baton Rouge College in, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Tuskegee University (formerly, Tuskegee Institute), Tuskegee, Alabama, and Southern University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She later married Thomas Jefferson Jordan of Baton Rouge on January 1, 1912, who was the son of Reese Jordan, Heflin farmer. Throughout most of her adult life, Mrs. Jordan was actively involved in numerous civic and social activities in and around the Scotlandville community. She was an accomplished educator serving both as a teacher and principal of Port Hudson Elementary and South Scotlandville Elementary Schools. She was well-known and loved throughout Scotlandville and the surrounding area. The home of Mr. and Mrs. Jordan was affectionately known by her many neighbors, friends, and students as ‘Annacre’ - serving as a welcoming, hospitable place for respite where neighbors could gather and visit with Mrs. Jordan. She was a member of Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Mr. and Mrs. Jordan raised three daughters:
- Sarah Ann Jordan Dixon
- Thelma Cora Jordan Griffith
- Ella Dee Jordan Thomas

All three women were married and educators like their mother. Streets in the Scotlandville area are named after all three respectively.

The northern Baton Rouge suburb of Scotlandville developed during the early twentieth century. A mere clustering of rural structures in 1900, this community grew with the arrival of large industry and particularly Southern University in 1914.
By the mid-1930's Scotlandville had an active business district at the intersection of Scenic Highway and Scotlandville Highway. By the 1960's, Scotlandville's business district had grown and residential development extended to the south and east of Harding Boulevard. More than 30,000 people called Scotlandville home with a high proportion of them being homeowners - a true measure of suburban living. Populated by African Americans, Scotlandville developed a strong sense of community which gave rise to a desire to incorporate as a separate municipality. Although incorporation attempts were unsuccessful Scotlandville remained a viable community defined by industrial development to the north and south and the Baton Rouge Metro Airport to the east.

In the early 1950's, prominent land owner Professor Thomas J. Jordan began developing land in the Scotlandville area.

Jordan developed one of the first African American neighborhoods in East Baton Rouge Parish. The majority of homeowners in this new neighborhood were World War II Veterans and their families. This neighborhood is known as Jordan Terrace.

In 1953, Thomas Jefferson Jordan, a Scotlandville Community Leader, donated the first 3 acres of land, to the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC) to initiate the establishment of a park for the citizens of Scotlandville. This park would provide recreation and an improved quality of life for the African American Community. The 3 acres of the park consisted only of a small playground with a few pieces of play equipment. In 1956 BREC acquired additional acreage from Mr. Jordan that became the 38-acre park that would be named in honor of his wife, Mrs. Anna T. Jordan Park.

The 1950's saw dramatic expansion and enhancements to the facilities within the park including the construction of the recreation center, swimming pool, tennis courts, ball fields and the installation of additional playground equipment. Parents came together to organize activities for children such as Halloween parties, picnics, scooter...
races, pageants, Easter-egg hunts and more. The park has served as a venue for jazz and blues concerts, little league baseball, adult softball, basketball leagues, family reunions, and many other celebrations. Countless Scotlandville area children have learned to swim since the 1950’s and continue to learn at the Anna T. Jordan pool.

During the late 1950’s and early 1960’s the community became more involved in the park. New facilities were built to accommodate the growing number of patrons. Anna T. Jordan Park has been a family park for many years. The holiday picnics, adult men and women softball leagues, youth baseball and softball, arts and crafts, ballet, swimming teams, flag football, adult and youth basketball leagues, boxing, beauty pageants, drama productions, gymnastics, record hops, holiday parties, swimming lessons, water shows, bicycle safety clinics, and horse shows are just a few of the many activities that have been held at the park over the years.

Over the years, this park has served as the keystone of the community of Scotlandville playing a primary role in providing much-needed recreation, cultural, social, and quality of life enhancements for the community.

One of the most successful programs at the Anna T. Jordan Park is the Seasoned Citizens Group. The adult group had been an effective force and catalyst in the community. This senior program has given back to the parents who helped build this community center.

Over the years, Anna T. Jordan Community Park has served as the keystone to the community of Scotlandville playing a primary role in providing important recreation, cultural, social and quality of life enhancements for the community. Over a decade ago, as part of the “Imagine Your Parks” strategic plan, Anna T. Jordan Park was developed into a larger community park. Community parks are designed to serve a larger geographic area than a neighborhood park. There are a wide range of amenities designed to engage the entire family for a whole day. The Anna T. Jordan park was the first community park developed under BREC’s “Imagine Your Parks” strategic plan.
The “Imagine Your Parks” strategic plan was created after a year and half of surveys, community meetings, brainstorming sessions and public meetings.

In 2016, the recreation center at **Anna T. Jordan Community park** underwent extensive renovation and expansion adding 6,400 square feet of additional space. The updated center opened in **January 2017** and features a new fitness center, conference room, computer lab, new restrooms, new storage spaces and a new dressing room for the gym stage. The gym is also now air conditioned and the floor was completely resurfaced. The renovations and expansion of the recreation center at Anna T. Jordan was made possible through funding from State Capital Outlay. While in the Louisiana Senate, Mayor Sharon Weston Broome championed the efforts to receive state funding and secured $1,435,000 for the project. The project totally $1,922,800.

The **Anna T. Jordan Park** over the years has reached many thousands of youths and provided a nurturing component in their lives through adulthood.

“.....As her life of 70 years is documented by the many girls and boys, women and men who experienced her life, who learned and played in the varied communities where she journeyed and who were shaped and molded by her abiding love, the Anna T. Jordan Staff and beneficiaries express their immeasurable gratitude to the family of the late, beautiful lady known as ANNA T.....”

- Dorothy E. Davis July, 1995

**Anna T. Jordan** died on December 10, 1956 and the Anna T. Jordan Park of Scotlandville is named in her honor.

---

[jordan, Anna T. Personal Papers. Archives and Manuscripts Department, John B. Cade Library, Southern University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.]


[Courtesy of: The Archives and Manuscripts Department/John B. Cade Library/Southern University and A&M College/Baton Rouge, LA. 70813-0001.]