The Dallas County Medical Society
Alliance Foundation
founded 1917

The Aldredge House
completed 1917

A Double Centennial Celebration
The George N. Aldredge House is ranked as one of only three nationally significant houses in the City of Dallas by renowned architectural historian Drury Blake Alexander in the 1975 Dallas Historic Landmarks Survey.
The Dallas County Medical Society Alliance Foundation founded 1917

The Dallas County Medical Society Alliance & Foundation is a philanthropic organization whose mission is to promote health education through community programming and to preserve and maintain the historic Aldredge House. The expanded goal is to restore the historic Aldredge House so that she can shine for her 100th Birthday!

Founded in 1917, The Dallas County Medical Society Alliance Foundation was the first medical auxiliary in the country. The organization served as a model for other medical auxiliaries throughout the United States that were founded in the early twentieth century. Members are physicians and physicians’ spouses who are dedicated to supporting the healthcare needs of Dallas residents.

This organization is staffed by volunteers who give freely of their time and talents without remuneration. There are over 300 volunteers who give countless hours annually to community health projects and health education. DCMSA members also contribute time, a portion of their dues and active fundraising to carry out their stewardship of the Aldredge House.
Dallas so prides itself on being a city of the new that it often forgets it has a past. The Aldredge House is a rare exemplar of that history, a miraculously intact manifestation of the distinctive gentility that is Dallas at its best. That it has been for so long a part of community life, witness to so many special moments, is a validation of the commodious elegance that characterized the work of Hal Thomon, among the finest residential architects of his generation.

Mark Lamster
Architecture Critic, The Dallas Morning News

In the early 1970s, when Rena Munger Aldredge was seeking a non-profit organization to permanently preserve her home and to maintain it as a welcoming part of the Dallas community, she chose the Dallas County Medical Society Alliance & Foundation. At that time the Alliance was searching for a home, under the leadership of its president Lindalyn Adams, one of the most respected preservationists in Dallas. Since receiving it as a gift in 1975, the Alliance has carefully restored and preserved Aldredge House as its home, shared it with other non-profits and members of the community, and made it available for a limited number of special events.
Home Base for Providing Health Education and Services

The Aldredge House is the Alliance’s home—a base from which they provide Dallas with health education and services. Programs and areas of interest change with the requests received for time, services and resources. In recent years partnering with other reputable programs—and providing resources and experienced volunteers, including physicians, to them—has been an effective way to maximize impact. These programs are usually presented in the neighborhoods they serve.

Most of the Alliance Foundation’s contributions in the health field are not glamorous. They represent the hands-on approach of trying to provide direct benefits, education and access to care for those at risk in our community. The following are some recent projects:

Hard Hats for Little Heads: The Alliance annually partners with the Texas Medical Association Foundation to present Hard Hats for Little Heads. The program provides bicycle safety information and gives bicycle helmets to young children, helping prevent head injuries.
Community Health Fair: Since 2010, the Alliance has provided volunteers (both members and their physician spouses) and funding (in 2014 they donated $3,500) to the Community Health Fair at the Church of the Incarnation. This annual event serves families and students that live near North Dallas High School.

Volunteer physicians and physician assistants conduct health screenings during the Community Health Fair held at the Church of the Incarnation.
Loading supplies collected for the Genesis Women’s Center.

Domestic Violence Initiatives:
Large donations of hygiene and first-aid items have regularly been collected for the Genesis Women’s Shelter and The Family Place.

Agape Clinic: Since 1983 East Dallas’ Agape Clinic has provided free health services to the needy. In 2014 the DCMSA donated $10,000 to the clinic and provided volunteer services.
Edith Cavell Nursing Scholarships: The Edith Cavell Nursing Scholarship program has been continuously active since 1954 and has benefited over 1,500 students. Every year the Alliance awards these scholarships to baccalaureate nursing degree students and then mentors recipients.

Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation: The Alliance co-chaired the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Bike-a-thon at the Cottonwood Creek Trail Park, raising approximately $10,000.
Preservation of the Aldredge House
house completed 1917
given to the Alliance 1974

The Alliance’s second major purpose is to preserve and maintain the historic Aldredge House, one of the most important domestic landmarks in Dallas.

The Aldredge House is one of the finest historic houses in the City of Dallas. Designed in 1915 by architect Hal Thomson in the French Eclectic style this house also uses splendid Renaissance detailing from the Beaux Arts movement. The lavish architecture complements the other wonderful period houses in the Swiss Avenue Historic District. For many years, it has been open to the public for events allowing guests to experience the grand interiors of the early twentieth century. Great care has been taken to preserve the historic features of this house by the Dallas County Medical Society Alliance Foundation. They received a Preservation Achievement Award from Preservation Dallas for their work to maintain this most important historic gem for future generations to enjoy.

David Preziosi,
Director Preservation Dallas
The History of Aldredge House, a Texas Historic Landmark

William J. and Willie Newberry Lewis were the home’s original owners. Lewis came to Texas at the age of fifteen and by age thirty was a highly-regarded cattleman and owner of the large R. O. Ranch. In 1912 he married Willie Newberry, a beautiful young Dallas debutante, and began making plans to build a grand home for her.

Henry B. Thomson was chosen as the architect for the Lewis’s home. Born in Austin in 1882, Henry B. “Hal” Thomson graduated from the University of Texas in 1902 and then undertook extensive travel in Europe. Returning from Europe, Thomson attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he earned a master’s degree in architecture. In 1907 he returned to Texas to establish his own architecture firm in Dallas. Thomson was soon sought out by those who wished to build an extraordinary home in one of the European-based styles then popular.

“Thomson’s social standing, his East Coast degree, and his extensive travel throughout Europe made [him] highly appealing to wealthy clients with sophisticated taste.” Thomson was “Dallas’s preeminent residential architect of the era.”

Willis Cecil Winters, FAIA
from The Homes of the Park Cities
Munger Place, then the most exclusive neighborhood in Dallas, was selected by the Lewises. Opened in 1905 Munger Place was then the only place in Dallas where one could be assured of living in a single-family neighborhood. In the years before zoning land use this could only be controlled by deed restrictions. The restrictions for Munger Place also required uniform heights, setbacks and side yards. The development accommodated a broad range of home prices. These ranged from $12,000 required for construction on Swiss Avenue to a $2,000 minimum cost on Reiger. The Lewises purchased a large lot on Swiss Avenue the centerpiece boulevard of Munger Place.

French Eclectic was the architectural style chosen. Thomson’s design, with its center pediment, columns and terrace balustrades, is the epitome of the lavish designs of the Gilded Era.
While Mr. Lewis worked closely with Thomson on many of the home details, Willie Lewis played an active role in the interiors of the home. She worked with architect Marion Fooshee, Thomson’s partner at the time, in picking out features such as the Caen stone used for the carved mantle in the living room, and also for the entry and exterior trim. Despite this Mrs. Lewis was not happy living in the stately, formal home. She reportedly wanted something smaller and more homey. The couple only lived in the house for a year or so before selling the house. Willie Lewis went on to make her mark as the talented author of *Between Sun and Sod, Tapadero and Willie, a Girl From Dallas*, rather than as the mistress of a great house. The home quickly changed hands twice before being purchased by the Aldredge family in 1921.

**George N. and Rena Munger Aldredge** moved into 5500 Swiss in 1921 along with their four children ages 4 to 13. Mrs. Aldredge’s father, Stephen I. Munger, and uncle, Robert S. Munger, were the developers of Munger Place. Her father oversaw the Improved Cotton Machine Manufacturing Company (Continental Gin Company) that manufactured a new gin that revolutionized cotton ginning around the world. Her uncle Robert oversaw Munger Place development.

George Aldredge was a successful businessman—serving as chair of the executive committee of the First National Bank and a director of Texaco. Mrs. Aldredge was very active in cultural affairs. She was a life member of the board of trustees of the Dallas Museum of Art and a charter member of the Founders Garden Club, an affiliate of the Garden Club of America.
The Aldredge House was the heart of the growing Aldredge family—the many family events grew to include husbands and wives and eventually seventeen grandchildren. In 1927 Mrs. Munger added an outdoor swimming pool to 5500 Swiss, a rarity before WW II. Although later removed, during the Aldredge years it entertained their four children and their friends—and later 17 grandchildren and their friends.

Mrs. Aldredge added two rooms to Aldredge house to accommodate her interests—an art gallery/theater and a glass conservatory. The gallery gave her a place to display her large art collection and to show the films that she made herself. Mrs. Aldredge poured herself into her home and for the conservatory alone she hand made over 2,600 tiles. She lived in her home until 1973 when she donated it to the Dallas County Medical Society Alliance.

A small part of the extensive Aldredge family celebrating Jeanne Aldredge’s 90th birthday
“It is exceedingly rare...”

It is exceedingly rare that a house of this age retains its original floor plan as well as a fully-intact interior, which includes original wall moldings, mantels, wood casings, staircases, and other interior architecture. The interiors of the Aldredge House, a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (1982), are regarded as the best preserved of an early twentieth-century home in Dallas. It’s remarkable condition can be attributed to the fact that the house has had just two major owners since 1921, George N. and Rena Munger Aldredge and the Dallas County Medical Society Alliance.

Katherine Seale
Chair, Dallas Landmark Commission
The Swiss Avenue Historic district Association meets at the Aldredge House monthly as one of the benefits the district receives from their neighbor.
The Aldredge House and the Dallas Community

Rena Munger Aldredge believed strongly in sharing her homes with the community. In addition to the continuous social and charity events she welcomed at her Dallas home, the gardens of her summer home at the Chautauqua Institution in western New York were always open to visitors.

At its 1975 dedication, the Aldredge House was dedicated to “...the enrichment of the community through the preservation of this landmark house and the tradition and heritage long associated with it.” Mrs. Aldredge had been part of the original fight to save Swiss Avenue. The Alliance has allowed the Swiss Avenue Historic District Association to meet there monthly without charge since its early days. SAHDA can use the folding chairs, podium and PA system and utilize the entire downstairs of the house. Also, the Alliance has participated in the annual Mother’s Day tour as a tour home, a place for a brunch or location for talks on preservation topics.

In addition, the Alliance’s health and preservation non-profit community partners are invited to use the house without charge once a year during the day. In 2015 these partners are:

- Alzheimer Association
- Crohens & Colitis Foundation
- The Senior Source
- Community Council of Greater Dallas
- Dallas Concilio
- Genesis Women’s Shelter
- Visiting Nurses Association
- National Council of Jewish Women
- Preservation Dallas
- National Alliance for Mental Illness
- Women’s Council of Dallas County
- Cystic Fibrosis-NE Texas Chapter
- Dallas Historical Society
- Catholic Charities
- Leap Foundation
- Edna Gladney Home
- Dallas Heritage Village
- The Friends of Fair Park
- Baylor Health Care System Foundation
- Dallas County Dept. of Health Services
- The Family Place
- Texas Health Resources Foundation
A catastrophic hailstorm hit the Swiss Avenue Historic District in June of 2012—breaking historic glass, damaging window frames, and demolishing the Aldredge House’s original slate roofs. Old copper gutters gave way and side porches suffered additional water damage. Respected restoration firms were sought out for sensitive projects. All damage was repaired and much additional restoration undertaken. In addition, the carriage house was renovated and the house’s interiors freshened. A grant from the Summer-lee Foundation helped toward these efforts.

- **Over $640,000 has been spent on restoration since June of 2012**

- **Preservation Dallas awarded Aldredge House a prestigious 2014 Preservation Achievement Award**

- **The Alliance established an Aldredge House Preservation Fund reducing the need for event rental income**

Mrs. Aldredge added the conservatory and made the handsome tiles herself. After the room suffered extensive hail damage, Eagle Scout Spencer Hardin completed a successful restoration effort.
Luncheons, Teas, Showers, Anniverseries

While Mrs. Aldredge was alive her home accommodated the many special events generated by her large brood of children and grandchildren—graduations, engagement parties, showers, anniverseries and such. She also made her home available for community events. Today the Alliance allows similar events to be held in Aldredge House. It provides a distinctive home-like setting in an elegant, beautifully furnished historic home, for important family celebrations, special events—and for their non-profit community partners.
Portraits, Photoshoots, Weddings

The Aldredge House provides a stunning background for portraits, whether bridal or business and is an excellent location for photoshoots of other types.

Aldredge House is also a beautiful setting for special events—such as anniversary, birthday and holiday parties and weddings. It is perfect for those who want a home wedding—providing a beautiful setting for quiet, understated events. Because of the residential location evening events are limited.
As one of the few historic houses in Dallas that is open to the public, the Aldredge House is an invaluable teaching tool, representing the history of an important period in the city's past.

Jann Patterson Mackey, Ph.D
Lecturer, Southern Methodist University

For additional information visit dcmsaf.org