

Press Release  
City of Perris

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **FRED T. PERRIS DAY RETURNS FOR ANNUAL TRADITION**

PERRIS, Calif. (January 29, 2020) — The Perris Valley Historical Museum is proud to host Fred T. Perris Day on Saturday, February 1, 2020 at the Perris Valley Historical Museum and historic Perris Santa Fe Depot, located at 120 W 4th Street in downtown Perris.

The program will begin at 11 am. The Pioneer Family to be honored for 2020 is the Family of Dora Nelson.

Dora Nelson's Sister-in-Law, Mary Ann Nelson from Georgia, was the first of the Nelson Family to arrive in Perris in 1902. Mary Ann worked as a domestic for five years and saved her money before sending for her husband Benjamin who arrived in Perris in 1907. Benjamin worked for the Railroad as a laborer and later, Benjamin and Mary Ann sent for their sister-in-law Dora.

Dora Nelson arrived in Perris in 1920 at the age of 68 with her three orphaned Granddaughters: Willa Mae, Mattie Pearl and Louise Conely. Dora was a very devoted Christian and originally attended the First Congregational Church in Perris. She organized prayer meetings in her home and in 1924 was a founding member of the First Baptist Church, located on 7th & F St. in Perris. At the time, First Baptist Church was the first "Negro" church established in Perris.

Dora Nelson passed away in 1930 after living in Perris for only 10 years. She was buried at the Perris Valley Cemetery. The Nelson family continues to live in Perris, as well as in Bakersfield, California, roughly 180 miles northwest of Perris. They will be on hand to share their story at the Dora Nelson Celebration on Saturday.

The Dora Nelson African American Art & History Museum located at 316 E 7th Street, Perris, CA was named in Dora Nelson's honor by founders Mable and Charles Kearney. The museum will host a celebratory 100th Anniversary Commemorative Event the Dora Nelson Family on Sunday, February 2, 2020 at 1 p. m.

Residents are welcome to come and enjoy the day with museum tours available. Admission is free to the public and refreshments will be served.