



THE CYCLONE



Hardin-Simmons Hosts 2007 Conference



WTHA presidents Cheryl Lewis and Travis Roberts

for 2007 and to vice-president, Shirley Eoff of San Angelo. New board members for 2007 are Mitchell Davenport of Jacksboro, Gene Preuss of Houston, Jean Stuntz of Canyon and Lewis Toland of Roswell, NM. The 2008 meeting of the association will be in Canyon, Texas on April 4-5.

The eighty-fourth annual meeting of the West Texas Historical Association convened at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene on March 30 - 31, 2007. Conference sessions were held in the Skiles Social Science Building with over 45 papers presented. The Friday evening banquet featured guest speaker Clive Siegle. Other highlights included a tour of Buffalo Gap Historic Village and an 1880s style base ball game.

Glen Ely received the Mrs. Percy Jones Award for Best Article in the *Year Book* with "Bedlam at Belknap: Frontier Lawlessness on the Butterfield Overland Mail Road in Texas 1858-1861." John McCullough of Texas Tech University was winner of the Best Student Essay Award for "Pre-Flights on Tech Campus: Texas Tech's World War II Pre-Flight Pilots (1943-1944)." Jim Matthews received the Rupert N. Richardson Award for the Best Book on West Texas with *Fort Concho: A History and a Guide*.

Congratulations to Travis Roberts of Marathon, our WTHA president

Cast Away and the Texas Panhandle

By Paul Carlson

The wonderful closing scenes in the popular 2000 movie *Cast Away*, starring Tom Hanks and Helen Hunt, were filmed in West Texas far up in the eastern Panhandle. The final scenes, which symbolize a future bulging with bright possibilities, occurred in the extreme southwest corner of Hemphill County where Farm to Market Road 48, Farm to Market Road 1268, and County Road 5 meet.

The lonely corner is southeast of Miami, Texas, and at the close of the movie Tom Hanks, as the film's leading character Chuck Noland, turns and looks briefly from the middle of the intersection in each direction. In all four directions the road reaches straight to a vanishing point on the far horizon. Here is a scene, if not typical, at least characteristic of West Texas: empty land and open space stretching as far as the eye can see.

In a transcendental way, the scene's location is a beautiful, unblemished spot.



There is romance and melancholy about the place, and in 2007 no ranch house, no barn or shed, and no clump of trees breaks the wide view of space, and sky, and ever changing clouds. In the 1830s George Catlin, who toured the plains to record Indian life and customs, noted that the region was "a place where the mind could think volumes; but the tongue must be silent that would *speak*, and the hand palsied that would *write*."

North from the lonely, isolated intersection, presumably the direction Hanks' movie character Chuck Noland planned to take, along the caliche-based

County Road 5 is George and Jane Arrington's Ranch. The Arringtons live in Canadian and their son Mike handles responsibilities associated with the ranch. Mike and his wife also operate a bed and breakfast at the old headquarters home, now called the Arrington Ranch House Lodge, which is located about five and one-half miles north of the intersection and depicted in both opening and closing scenes of the movie.

George's grandfather, George Washington "Cap" Arrington, built the ranch. Cap Arrington, most West Texans recall, was a Confederate veteran from Alabama and later a Texas Ranger, who had come to Texas from Honduras sometime after shooting to death in 1867 a black businessman. After having changed his name from John C. Orrick, Jr., Arrington had joined the Rangers and served in South Texas. In 1879, he became captain of Company C of the Frontier Battalion, and officials in Austin sent him to the Texas Panhandle. Although effective, (Continued page 2)

From the Executive Director



Dear Fellow Members:

What a spring and summer! The rain and unseasonably cool temperatures have been a blessing and in some parts of West Texas it still lingers.

The weather was a prominent feature of the Abilene conference. Members literally fought their way to the meeting. J. Patrick Hughes who drove in from Austin ducked his truck into a carwash stall when the hail started to fly. The wind blew so hard it hit his truck regardless. An anonymous member driving west on I-20 reported being able to exceed the speed limit without penalty because emergency personnel and vehicles were busy with more serious matters. Meanwhile, others who had already arrived in town were running for cover because of the severe thunderstorm and tornado. Annette and Garry Nall reported taking cover in a store after the warning sounded. What a memorable time and great meeting. Many thanks go to Tiffany and Rob Fink, B.W. Aston, and Don Taylor of Abilene for making it a great "homecoming."

Through the spring and summer members in West Texas reported on various trips and discoveries. Two stalwart colleagues, Wes and Jake Sheffield, tried canoeing down the Brazos, and shared pictures of the swollen river at an almost unimaginable flood stage. The spring rains stopped long enough for a group, led by Paul Carlson and Tom Crum, to visit Cynthia Ann Parker's recapture site on the Pease River outside of Crowell courtesy of longtime member Clark Hitt. Bryan Edwards and Keith Owen toured the new 3RF (Three Rivers Foundation) astronomy campus at Comanche Springs just west of Crowell and smack-dab in the middle of the rolling plains.



Special thanks go to WTHA members Patricia Clark, Monte Monroe, Bill Tynan, and San JuanitaValenciano who worked as volunteers on the North American Society of Sports History (NASSH) Conference in Lubbock in May. NASSH through its local arrangements chair Jorge Iber donated \$793.91 to the association as a thank you.

Fall is a busy season. Upcoming events include a WTHA session at the East Texas Historical Association meeting September 27-29 in Nacogdoches. Participants include Troy Ainsworth, Jennifer Spurrier, Holle Humphries, and Travis Roberts (Chair). As we have for the past three years the WTHA will be sending a session to the Center for Big Bend Studies Conference November 9-10 in Alpine. If you would like to participate please contact us. Also, please remember to forward proposals for papers or sessions for the 2008 annual conference that will be held this year in Canyon.

Have a great Fall.

Tai Kreidler
Executive Director

Cast Away & the Panhandle

(cont. from page 1) Arrington was a stern and aggressive officer who made enemies as easily as he made friends. He resigned his captaincy in 1882 to enter ranching and to serve as sheriff of Wheeler County and fourteen counties attached to it.

Arrington, who married Sarah "Sally" Caroline Burnette in 1883, lived in Mobeetie while he was sheriff of Wheeler County. They had nine children. They left Mobeetie in 1891, when he resigned as sheriff, and moved to their ranch, which was located along the upper Washita River and its tributaries in Hemphill County about fifteen miles north of town.

In 1893, British owners of the 250,000-acre Rocking Chair Ranch, which was headquartered in Collingsworth County, asked Arrington to manage their land and cattle company. He agreed, but three years later the Englishmen sold their property, and Arrington returned to his own ranch. Cap Arrington died in 1923.

The Arrington Ranch remains in the family. In 2007, the ranch house, minus the shrubs and some of the trees, looked much like it did in at the time of Cap's death and much like it did in the 1970s. Except for the trees and shrubs, not much changed, for in 2007 the Arrington Ranch House Lodge; the entry drive with its tall, colorful archway; and the wide barn out back remained remarkably as they did in *Cast Away*, a movie with some dramatically characteristic scenes of West Texas.



Panhandle crossroads from the movie *Cast Away*.

Activities of Company E, Frontier Battalion, Texas Rangers, 1874-1880

by T. R. Havins

[Condensed from the 1935 Year Book.]

The Frontier of Texas in the seventies was turbulent. The line of counties beginning with Clay on the north and including Jack, Young, Parker, Stephens, Eastland, Erath, Comanche, Brown, McCullough, Menard, Mason, Kimble, Kerr, Real, Uvalde, and Val Verde were constantly beset with dangers from marauding Indians, organized bands of thieves and notorious outlaws.

Menard county had its rival bands of cattle thieves. Kimble county outlaws attacked Fort McKavett horse thieves under the very shadow of the officers' mess. Mason county suffered from inroads of thieves from Llano county. On June 25, 1874, Wilson Hey, county judge of Mason county wrote to Governor Coke as follows:

At the request of the citizens of this county I would respectfully represent to you that parties from Llano and other counties are continually depredating upon the cattle of said citizens: that during the last month parties of Llano County... in open violation of the law have been gathered and driving cattle from Mason county without having them inspected as the law directs. And it is a positive fact that some of our citizens have had to go to Llano, a distance of twenty-five miles, and take from herds the very same milch-cows that they had more than once taken from herds before, and the cows having been driven from their range and their calves left in the pens and when forbearance ceased to be a virtue and warrants were sworn out for the depredators they made open threats that if they came after them with the sheriff, that they would ... fight.ⁱ

Comanche county was endangered by the presence of John Wesley Hardin and Jim Taylor, leaders of a band of desperate characters. On May 28, 1874, the business and professional men of Comanche to the number of twenty-three memorialized the Governor in the following language:

Your petitioners, citizens of Comanche county, respectfully represent that the county of Comanche is infested with a band of murderers and thieves headed by the notorious John Wesley Hardin and Jim Taylor that renders the lives and property of peaceable citizens unsafe. They represent that on the 25th day of May, 1874, that said Hardin and Taylor came into the town of



Company E, Frontier Battalion Texas Rangers (photos from Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum)

Comanche and wantonly murdered one Charlie Webb, the deputy sheriff of Brown county, who was then peaceable and quietly attending to his private business.

They further represent that they come in such large numbers that they invariably escape before a sufficient number of citizens can be armed and brought together.

They further represent that in order to protect themselves they are compelled at great expense and neglect of their usual peaceable vocations to keep a large number of armed men in the field and they therefore pray your excellency that you would detail twenty-five or thirty men of Capt. Waller's command of the frontier troops to be stationed at the town of Comanche to be subject to the orders of the sheriff of this county and that they be especially charged with the capture of the said John Wesley Hardin and Jim Taylor and their coadjutors.ⁱⁱ

That the unrest among the citizenry was genuine is borne out in Captain J. R. Waller's report to Major Jones. On May 30, 1874, Waller wrote:

My company was mustered in on Monday, May 25th. Since which time I have been in active service trying to arrest the John Wesley Hardin gang of murders that are preying on the lives of the citizens of this county The people of this county have forwarded petitions to the governor asking that my command be kept here until the county is cleaned of the desperadoes as there is a great deal more danger from them than from the Indians.ⁱⁱⁱ

There were serious Indian disturbances in this region, however. Big Foot, the Kiowa chief, was active during the moonlight nights of each succeeding month. He slipped from the Fort Sill Reservation with ease and daring, and the frontier settlements from Red River to lower Burnett county felt the rigor of his cunning and ruthlessness. His band murdered the Johnson family in Burnett county. He charged the

Williams ranch settlement in Brown county in open daylight and made good his escape. Santanta and his band murdered a group of government teamsters in Jack county. The Millsaps, Lovings, and Landrums were attacked in Parker county, the Fraziers were murdered in Palo Pinto county.^{iv}

So great was the peril of the settlers on the frontier, when the legislature met in 1874, a bill was passed to reorganizing the state ranger force and providing for a battalion of rangers of six companies of seventy-five mounted men each to be stationed along the frontier counties from Red River to the Rio Grande. The bill was approved by Governor Richard Coke on April 10, 1874, and Adjutant General William Steele began preparations for the mustering into service of the new organization.

Each company was assigned one captain, one first lieutenant and one second lieutenant. The second general order issued by General Steele on May 6, 1874, gave directions for the organization of the force.

Captains will proceed at once to the organization of their company, calling to their aid the lieutenants assigned to them. . .

. The period of service will be twelve months unless sooner discharged. As it is expected that the force will be kept actively employed during their term of service, only sound young men without families and with horses will be received. Persons under indictment or of known bad character or habitual drunkards will be rejected.^v

The captains in the force drew mostly a salary of one hundred dollars. Lieutenants received seventy-five dollars, sergeants fifty dollars per month, while the salary of corporals and privates was forty dollars per month. Each man furnished his own horse and saddle and revolver. The adjutant general's department furnished each man with a breech-loading rifle at cost, the price of the arm being deducted from the first month's pay. The state also furnished ammunition for all classes of arms as well as subsistence for both men and horses. Each company was equipped with draft animals and wagons, tents, blankets, cooking utensils and pack saddles.

Captain Jeff Maltby of Burnett county was named as commander of Company E and was directed to recruit his men from the citizenry of Burnett, Brown and Coleman counties. Captain Maltby was a native of Illinois. He came to Texas prior to the War Between the States and

was living in Burnett county at the beginning of the war. He served as captain of Company G, Seventeenth Texas Volunteer Infantry from the outbreak of the war until February 19, 1863, at which time he resigned his commission because of poor health. He returned to his home in 1863 and was one of the leaders of a group of determined men who fought the Indians during the perilous days of 1863-1865.

When provision for the organization of the Frontier Battalion was made by the legislature in 1874, the friends of Captain Maltby put him forward for appointment as major of the battalion. Governor Richard Coke chose Major John B. Jones as commanding officer for the new force and Captain Maltby was forced to be content with the command of one of the companies of the battalion. First Lieutenant James Connell and Second Lieutenant B. F. Best were the other commissioned officers of Company E.

Maltby, Connell, Best and thirty Burnett county men left Austin, Texas, May 10, 1874, for Brownwood to complete the organization of the company. They carried arms and ammunition for Captain Waller's company at Comanche and for Company E as well. They reached Brownwood on June 5, 1874, and proceeded with the enlistment of recruits from Brown and Coleman counties. That the young men of the frontier counties were eager for service is attested in the filling of the quota of the company on June 6, one day following the arrival of the officers in Brownwood.^{vi}

Temporary provisions for maintaining the company were left to Captain Maltby, and he made a contract with John Gilbert, a merchant of Brownwood, to furnish the necessary supplies until Major Jones could order the company's provisions from Dallas. Feed for the horses was bought locally. The firm of McPeters and Nichols of Brownwood contracted to furnish shelled corn for the company's needs at one dollar and forty cents per bushel. Corn was bought in varying quantities from one hundred to six hundred bushels at a time.^{vii}

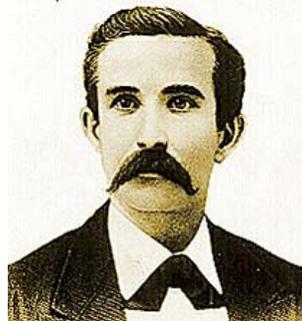
The month of June 1874 was spent in scout duty in Brown, San Saba, and Lampassas counties. A small detachment of the company was under the direction of the sheriff of Brown county, aiding in the arrest of numerous thieves who were at that time being harbored by some of the disreputable citizenry. The remainder of the company under the command of Captain Maltby went into camp at the mouth of Mud Creek on the Jim Ned in the western section of Brown county.

Under the terms of the law providing for the force, the ranger companies were to be maintained under strict military discipline. That Company E was far from this is attested in a communication from Major John B. Jones to Adjutant General William Steele dated August

9, 1874. James reported to Steele that he had visited the headquarters of Company E and found Captain Maltby absent in Burnett county, Lieutenant Connell was away on sick leave, while Lieutenant Best was absent in Brownwood. The camp was in a slovenly condition with the men all idle. The horses were neither hobbled nor sidelined and were being guarded by only one man.

On August 15, 1874, Jones wrote to Maltby and directed him to maintain more strict discipline over his men. His letter was a virtual ultimatum to the captain either to improve his company or resign.

That Jones had found conditions as he described in borne out in an episode which occurred on the night of August 17, 1874. A detail of twelve men under Corporal Henry Sackett had escorted Major Jones from camp Mud Creek to Menardville. On their return to camp they camped for the night a few miles below the mouth of the Concho River. That night a small band of Indians surprised the rangers and drove away their horses, leaving them forty miles from their headquarters without mounts.^{viii}



Major John B. Jones

Immediately following the visit of Major Jones, Lieutenant Connell resigned and Lieutenant Best became first lieutenant. B. S. Foster became second lieutenant. General order No. 8, issued by Adjutant General Steele and dated November 15, 1874, reduced the personnel of all companies of the battalion to one lieutenant, two sergeants, three corporals, and twenty-five enlisted men. On December 13, 1874, Captain Maltby and Lieutenant Best were relieved and lieutenant B. S. Foster became the commanding officer of the company.^{ix}

The Indian depredations on the frontier were always perpetrated during moonlight nights, when the light aided them in locating horses. In entering the territory of Brown, Coleman and other counties below these, the Indians chose trails by certain geographical eminences. These were Caddo Peak in central Callahan county, Robinson's Peak in western Callahan county, Table Mountain in northeastern Runnels county, and Santa Anna Mountain in eastern Coleman county. The rangers came to watch these places with interest and rarely failed to find the trail of depredating bands around these mountains.

One of the activities of Company E was to clear the country of the troublesome Indians. On July 30, Captain Maltby reported to Jones.

Scouting parties first twenty days. July 24, Lt. Best and 21 men to guard Table Mt. Pass struck Indian trail and divided. Sgt. Israel and 10 men in pursuit. Met six Indians coming in. Two Indians killed and two mortally wounded.

On October 30, he wrote:

On October 19, Sargt. Israel and 16 men on scout to Table Mountain. On night of 19, near the Wiggins Ranch five Indians ran in and tried to stampede the horses, killing A. Trotter's horse. The horse being sidelined and hobbled, the guards ready to receive them, all they got was a few needle cartridges and returned rather in a hurry; not wishing horses at that time.^x

Later in November another brush with Indians was the incident which served the purpose of ridding the frontier of Big Foot and his troublesome band. A detachment of Maltby's troops were on a scout in the vicinity of Santa Anna mountain. They found the trail of a band of Indians coming in from the northwest.

The trail was so plain the men were able to follow it at a brisk gallop. The Indians were overtaken on the waters of Clear Creek in Brown county, five miles west of Brownwood. As it was growing dusk the Indians were charged and two of them were killed and scalped, others wounded but lost in the darkness and brush.

Big Foot and his braves escaped southward into San Saba county where they stole several horses then turned back through Coleman county and headed toward Table Mountain. Three days later Captain Maltby and eight men picked up their trail and followed it westward to Valley Creek in Runnels county. The located the Indians in camp just as darkness approached.

As they approached nearer, the ground became sandy and their horses' feet made but very little noise. In this cautious manner they rode up behind a clump of small trees and brush and to within two hundred yards of the fire, where they halted and made a careful survey of the camp. They discovered that horses were tied south of the fire and that one horse was tied west of the fire and their position was east of the fire. Two Indians seemed to be on guard, as they walked about to the fire and back to the horses. The horse west of the fire was from every appearance Jim Brown's race horse, Gray Eagle, and his rider was a woman. The other five Indians were busy around the fire cooking beef which they had killed when they made this halt. There were others about attending to the horses that they had ridden through the day. All the horses that were tied around the fire were fresh horses for the Indians to get away on in

case they were overtaken. As they were so busy cooking, our party saw that plenty of time was given them to mature their plan of attack.

The charge was sudden and desperate in strict keeping with the Texas Rangers. At the sound of the horses' feet, Big Foot and his lieutenant sprang to their horses, but before Big Foot could mount, Captain Jeff's six shooter spoke its voice of death and Big Foot's horse fell dead. Big Foot then turned and aimed his Spencer rifle, but before he could pull the trigger Captain Jeff's pistol spoke again, and it's leaden messenger of death went to the mark, knocking the hammer off of the Indian's gun and driving it into his cheek, then glanced down striking him in the jugular vein and breaking his neck. The blood spurted high and Big Foot fell to rise no more.

In this fight the Indian band was practically wiped out and their death had a most salutary effect. Only a few Indians ever came into this section following the death of Big Foot.

Scouting for Indians and chasing them was not the sole mark of the frontier company. With the spread of the cattle kingdom stealing on the frontier became a grave problem. The report of Lieutenant Best for April 1875, is indicative of the condition. He wrote: "Scouting and searching for thieves." The report of Lieutenant Best for April 1876, reads as follows:

On April 9, Sargt. Israel and seven men started to execute a warrant issued by chief justice of Coleman county, to arrest one C. King, charge of stealing one yoke of steers and trading them to W. L. McAuley for a pony. Started after dark, rode to Twin Mountains on Bayou. Next day arrested said C. King within three miles of Green's ranch. Returned to head of Deep Creek Bayou, camp Colorado; delivered prisoner up to court who took the pony in possession and sent prisoner on his way rejoicing.

His report for February 1877, read: "Arrested two thieves who had stolen property from Joe Smith on Elm Creek in Taylor county. Eight rangers followed, arrested and took them to jail in Eastland."

On orders from Major Jones, Company E moved from Camp Colorado to Kickapoo Creek in Concho county. For April the report runs: "Arrested cattle thieves. Guarded prisoners at request of Judge of Coleman City. Arrested murderer and took him to Austin."

Coleman was not the only town on the frontier that needed the protection of the rangers during the turbulent seventies. Menardville suffered much from the rivalry of thieving bands located in Kimble and Menard counties. The Menard county men lived in the vicinity of Fort McKavett. Upon the arrest of a member of either of the groups there was sure to be trouble for the sheriff when the case was called for trial. Company

E was called upon to furnish court protection in Menardville six times between September 1877 and December 1878.

A tragedy occurred at Fort McKavett that is indicative of the times:

January 15, Lt. Reynolds and scout returned from Ft. McKavett where some negroes robbed Ben Johnson and George Stevens (teamsters of the Bat'l.) of their pistols and when ordered to surrender by Lt. Reynolds they replied they would die first, and fired, doing no damage, and then a fight took place between the rangers and the negroes which resulted in the killing of three negroes, our loss was one man wounded (Tim McCarty) from which he later died.

Lieutenant N. O. Reynolds succeeded to the command of Company E in September 1877. The entire company moved to Comanche at this time upon orders from Major Jones for the purpose of guarding John Wesley Hardin during his trial for the killing of Charles Webb, a deputy sheriff of Brown county. Hardin was escorted from Austin, where he had been held in jail since his arrest in Florida. Upon arrival in Comanche, Reynolds found that feeling against Hardin was strong. He took precautions to meet possible mob violence by placing the rangers inside the jailyard and the jail itself. The trial of Hardin was conducted without interruption and he received a sentence of twenty-five years in the penitentiary for the killing of Webb. Company E was called on for guard duty and a detail under Reynolds escorted Hardin to the penitentiary at Huntsville.



Outlaw Sam Bass

Less than a year following the handling of Hardin, Reynolds and his company were called upon to assist in the capture of Sam Bass. At the time Bass and his band made their appearance in Round Rock, Company E was stationed at San Saba. Major Jones, learning of the plans of the outlaws to rob the bank in Round Rock, sent word for Lieutenant Reynolds to lose no time in

rushing a detail of his company to aid in the capture of Bass and his band. Reynolds received the message around seven o'clock in the evening. In company with Sergeant Neville and six privates he set out for an all-night ride. The rangers arrived in Round Rock just after noon, but too late to take part in the gun battle that was fought in the street between the outlaws and two members of Company E who had accompanied Major Jones from Austin along with two local officers and a Travis county deputy sheriff.

A detail of the company under the leadership of Sergeant Neville found Bass during the afternoon and brought him to Round Rock where he died from wounds suffered in the fight with officers under the command of Major Jones.

[Travis Robert Havins (1890-1976) was a history professor and chairman of the department of social studies at Howard Payne University in Brownwood. The son of a sheepherder, Havins worked his way through college, earning a BA from Howard Payne in 1927 and an MA from the University of Texas in 1931. He completed his PhD from the University of Texas in 1941 before serving the Army Air Force during World War II. He served on the Texas Prison Board from 1947 to 1953 and is recognized for helping reform the state's prison system. He was the author of numerous articles and several books, including a history of Brown County. In 1959, he was made a fellow of the Texas State Historical Society.]

ⁱ Wilson Hay to Richard Coke, in Adjutant General's Papers, Correspondence of Major John B. Jones, Archives, Texas State Library.

ⁱⁱ G. A. Beeman et al to Richard Coke, Adjutant General's Papers, correspondence of Major John B. Jones, Archives, Texas State Library.

ⁱⁱⁱ Walker to Jones, May 20, 1874, *ibid*.

^{iv} See Taylor Thrilling Tales of Texas, 50ff; Jeff Maltby, Captain Jeff (Colorado, Texas, 1906), p.26; "The Fight at Williams' Ranch," *Frontier Times*, Vol. VI, 176.

^v Adjutant General's Papers, Major John B. Jones Correspondence, Archives Texas State Library.

^{vi} Maltby, Captain Jeff to Jones. Jones Correspondence, *lff*.

^{vii} Monthly Report, June 30, 1874, Adjutant General's Papers.

^{viii} Maltby to Jones, August 26, 1874, *ibid*.

^{ix} *ibid*.

^x Maltby to Jones, Oct 19, 1874, *Ibid*.

NEWS FROM AROUND WEST TEXAS

Ty Cashion, associate professor of history at Sam Houston State University and author of *Sam Houston State University/An Institutional Memory: 1879-2004*, was elected to membership in the Texas Institute of Letters.

Dr. Frederick W. Rathjen, professor emeritus of history who retired from West Texas A&M University in 1990, has been named a Fellow by the Texas State Historical Association. Rathjen was presented with a certificate in recognition of the honor at the association's annual meeting March 10-12 in San Antonio.

Leland Turner has been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship. Turner had won one of WTHA's Ernest Wallace Graduate Student Research grants for a comparative history between West Texas and Australian ranching. Fulbright support will help him to carry the research further.

Lou Rodenberger has received the Stirrup Award for Best Article in *The Roundup*, quarterly publication of Western Writers of America (for year 2006). The essay title: "Tom Lea, Novelist: The Eyes of an Artist, the Ears of a Writer."

In April 2007, **Alvin Davis** received special recognition for his years of volunteer service to the Masked Rider Program. The Texas Tech Masked Rider Committee honored him during an event at Tech's Jones Stadium.

Tiffany Fink has been granted tenure at Hardin-Simmons University.

Fredonia Paschall, Head of Technical Services of Texas Tech University's Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, was promoted to from Associate Archivist to Archivist. Last year she achieved recognition as a Certified Archivist from the American Association of Archivists. She and Rob Weiner of the Lubbock Public Library contributed a chapter, "Nature Conquering, or Nature Conquered in *The Wind*", in *The Landscape of Hollywood Westerns: Ecocriticism in an American Film Genre* published by the University of Utah Press.

Monte Monroe, Archivist of the Southwest Collection at Texas Tech University's Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library, was promoted from Assistant Archivist to Associate Archivist.

Dr. Rob C. Fink starts as a Visiting Assistant Professor of History at McMurry University as of August 2007.

Texas A&M Press has recently published *Comanche Society: Before the Reservation* by **Dr. Gerald Betty** of Angelo State University. In this book, Betty analyzes the formation of clans, the hierarchy in family and generational relationships, and ancestor worship and related religious ceremonies, providing fresh perspectives on a people long portrayed as world-class horsemen and marauding raiders.

Lawyer-turned-writer **Bill Neal** has recently published *Getting Away with Murder on the Texas Frontier: Notorious Killings & Celebrated Trials* (Texas Tech University Press). Neal's book explores some sensational murder cases in Northwest Texas from the 1880s through World War I. Most of these stories have never been published in a book until now, and surprisingly, in almost all of these tales of early murder, the accused manages to "skate home free."

Dr. T. Lindsay Baker, director of the W. K. Gordon Center for Industrial History of Texas in Thurber, Texas, has released his fourth book on the subject of windmills through University of Oklahoma Press. The book is entitled *American Windmill: An Album of Historic Photographs*.

Donald W. Whisenhunt, a long-time member of WTHA, recently published *President Herbert Hoover*, a volume in the *First Men, America's President's Series*. This series is published by Nova Science Publishers in New York.

Drawing upon her experiences growing up on a ranch in far West Texas, **June Redford Van Cleef** published a book, *The Texas Outback: Ranching on the Last Frontier*, in 2006. Her black and white photographs capture the spirit of the residents of that area. Well-known author Elmer Elton wrote the foreword and Bill Wright provided the text.

WTHA President **Travis Roberts** will be the moderator of the association's panel at the East Texas Historical Association conference on September 27-29. Panelists include **Troy Ainsworth** of El Paso, **Holle Humphries** of Lubbock, and **Jennifer Spurrier** of Lubbock.

The **Texas Folklore Society** will be meeting in Lubbock on Easter weekend 2008. WTHA member **Kenneth Davis** is in charge of local arrangements, while **Cynthia Savage** serves as the society's president and **Tom Crum** is Counselor. Also, **Lou Rodenberger** will be honored next year as a Fellow of the society.

The **Fort Chadbourne Foundation** is in the process of restoring the Double Officer's Quarters building at Fort Chadbourne.

Call for Reenactors: 2008 marks **Coleman County's 150th birthday**. They'll be celebrating all year long. If any WTHA members are involved in reenacting or do period demonstrations and would like to participate in any Coleman County events, contact Eric Joffrion by email joffrion@web-access.net or phone 325-625-4318.

AWARDS:

Call for Papers: The **Texas United Methodist Historical Society** announces a \$250 cash award for the best article focusing upon some aspect of the history of Methodism in Texas written by an undergraduate or graduate student enrolled in a college or university. The winner will have the opportunity to present the essay at the Society's spring meeting and may have it published in the *Heritage Journal*, the Society's historical journal. For guidelines for the entry due no later than January 31, 2008, please contact Dr. Garry L. Nall, Student Essay Award Chair, 7206 Versailles Drive, Amarillo, Texas 79121, (806)355-0566, or gnall@alumni.utexas.net.

CALL FOR PAPERS:

The Cyclone is looking for short articles (500-700 words) on historic sites or archeological digs on private property or in out-of-the-way places. Accompanying photos are a plus. Contact editors Jim & Becky Matthews jbmatthews2@juno.com or at 4230 Briarcrest, San Antonio, TX 78247.

Journal of South Texas, the biannual publication of the South Texas Historical Association, is looking for good articles that address some aspect of the history/heritage of South Texas/Rio Grande Valley/Northern Mexico. Contact editor Tom Britten at JST@utb.edu.

Call for Information: **Wayne Lease** is collecting information with the intent of creating a manuscript on Towns of the Past in Texas. Why they were built and why they are no more. Their stories, legends, photos, documents and other information. If requested, he will scan and return submitted documents. Contact him at w.lease@worldnet.att.net

In Memory:

C. Richard King, journalist, author, historian, and educator, died on Friday, Aug. 3, 2007. King was a fourth-generation Texan, and a prolific writer. He authored 18 books - mostly dealing with Texas history. He was born in Gorman in 1924, and moved to Stephenville in 1929. Graduating from Stephenville High School in 1942, he later served during World War II in the U.S. Army in Europe. His contributions to the Stephenville Historical Museum, the First United Methodist Church, the Stephenville Masonic Lodge, Tarleton State University, and other organizations have made a positive difference to many.

Eva Camunez Tucker died on June 24, 2007, at the age of 96. She was a philanthropist who contributed to numerous organizations, including St. Joseph Catholic Church, Angelo State University, the West Texas Collection, Fort Concho National Historic Landmark, and many outreaches to the needy. She was the first Hispanic graduate of San Angelo High School in 1930 and a teacher in Mertzon and Ballinger in the 1930s and 1940s. When working at Mertzon, she had to catch a ride from San Angelo each day with sheep-shearers because, being Hispanic, she could not find a place to live in Mertzon. She then worked as a mail carrier in Brownsville and Laredo during World War II. She was also a translator for the State Department before marrying Art Tucker in 1948. Tucker has been the subject of two papers at West Texas Historical Association meetings and one *Year Book* article in 2003.

ENCOURAGING YOUNG HISTORIANS

Abilene Students Present Papers



Ten fifth grade students from the Abilene School District's ALPS program presented papers at the most recent West Texas Historical Association conference. Their teacher, Mrs. Janna Dowell, had assigned the gifted/talented students a research project on individual buildings or people of historic Abilene. The students responded by dressing up as historic people and presenting short, well-written essays. The entertaining papers included presentations by early settlers such as Mrs. Clay Merchant, an early doctor, and an entrepreneur who carried his money in his hat. Dr. Rob Fink moderated the session which included the following presenters: Katie Garcia, Garrett Drennan, Laura Churchill, Jessica Womak, Caroline Cooke, Zoe Green, Michael Woodward, Carlee Lane, Mattie Stokes, and Janice Bonneau. Mrs. Dowell said that 110 students from all the Abilene elementary schools participate in ALPS and she had a difficult time choosing only ten papers.

Though the WTHA board has often talked of encouraging presentations by local students, this is the first time a panel of public school students has participated at the West Texas Historical Association conference.

Mott Creek Ranch Dig

By Marisue Powell

A small group from Andrews Middle School took part in the 2007 spring archeological student dig at Mott Creek Ranch near Matador. The group received a great deal of mentoring from avocational archeologists who volunteer their time to work on the bison processing site located at the edge of a creek bluff.

Joining in the work was Brett Cruse, Texas Historical Commission Steward Coordinator for Region 1. Cruse described the site as "a habitation site with a thick midden deposit that contains large amounts of bison bone, projectile points, and some ceramics. There appears to be two occupations with the earlier represented by brownware (Southwestern) ceramics and corner-notched arrowpoints, and the later occupation with side-notched arrowpoints and cordmarked ceramics that appear to be very similar to wares at the Buried City site in Ochiltree County."

Prior to the weekend campout, the students were instructed in the proper excavating and recording techniques by their science teacher and site dig master Rick Day in the classroom and in a mock dig in an athletic sand pit. Other students in the class who were unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts later participated in the cleaning, restoration and identification of the artifacts.

The results of the dig were shared with parents and school board members during a slide show and exhibition at the end of the school year. This is the third year that Andrews ISD has sponsored the student dig, which benefits the Motley County Museum of Matador.



Archive of the Ropesville Farms Project

By J.B. Shannon

The Archive of the Ropesville Farms Project was established in 2005 to serve as a repository for papers, photos, oral histories and artifacts related to the Ropesville Farms Project which was established in 1936 as a part of FDR's plan to help farm families overcome the double whammy of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl. Its goals are to preserve local history for future generations and to provide information for New Deal Scholars. The Archive has been invited by the National New Deal Preservation Association to participate in the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the New Deal to be observed in 2008. A special exhibit is being planned.

The Ropesville Farms Project, twenty miles southwest of Lubbock, was originally sponsored by the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce and was located on 16,000 acres of virgin land purchased from the Spade Ranch. In size, it was the second largest of the 100 projects that were eventually established all across the United States.

The Federal government provided not only complete farm units for each of the seventy-seven families who were resettled,

but also assistance from a farm manager and a home supervisor. They instructed the families to use innovative farming practices and methods to raise and preserve food products so that they could be self-sufficient.

A community building (where the Archive is located) was provided so that the families could meet for special programs and recreational activities. The Project became well-known for its success and government officials often brought visitors to show off its achievements. Ms. Eleanor Roosevelt visited and mentioned The Project in one of her "My Day" columns. Arthur Rothstein, a famous WPA photographer, documented the Project in film. These photos are a part of the "American Memories" collection of the library of Congress. The Project came under individual ownership in 1943, when farmers were allowed to purchase their land from the Federal government which had been serving as their landlord since 1936.

In speaking of the various resettlement projects, President Roosevelt observed:

These projects represented something new, and because we in America had little or no experience along these lines, There were some failures. But there

were lessons to be learned from this bold government venture which would save a hundred times their cost in dollars.

The Ropesville Project was not one of the failures. It has proven to be one of the most successful of the "noble experiments" which was attempted during the dark days of the Great Depression.

THE CYCLONE

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Editors: Jim & Becky Matthews

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Check out back issues of the Cyclone at our website <www.wtha.org> maintained by webmaster Lynn Whitfield.

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