



THE CYCLONE



2012 Conference Announces Officers & Awards

The 89th Annual Meeting of the West Texas Historical Association convened at Sul Ross State University in Alpine on March 30-31, 2012. Fifty-six papers were presented in sessions beginning Friday morning and continuing through noon on Saturday. The Association elected Marisue Potts of Matador, President and J. Tillapaugh of Odessa, Vice President at the business meeting on Saturday.

Tom Crum, Bruce Glasrud and Harwood Hinton were named new Fellows of the Association. Patrick Crawford received the Mrs. Percy Jones Award for Best Article in the Yearbook for *Tracking Ancient Beasts: The Saga of the Glen Rose Dinosaur Footprints*. Other awards included Stuart Williams for the Outstanding Student Essay, Glen Ely, the Rupert N. Richardson Award for the Best Book on West Texas for *Where the West Begins: Debating Texas Identity*, the Ernest Wallace Grant for Graduate Research on West Texas History to Brandon Schuler and the William Curry Holden Research Award to Robert Hall.

Next year's WTHA meeting will be held on April 5-6, 2013, at the Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas.



2012 WTHA President Marisue Potts with 2011 President Bruce Glasrud.

The Stately Sherwood Courthouse

By Barbara Barton

Although the Sherwood Courthouse has stood majestically in the center of Sherwood for 111 years, it was an active county seat for only 36. Now this limestone, two storied edifice looks over a sleepy little community, but if buildings could talk, it would tell of a busier time when citizens arrived in their buggies to do business inside its walls.

Sherwood had grown into a vibrant town in the 1880s but was still a part of Tom Green County. Successful ranchers and farmers called this town home. Some 25 miles northeast of Sherwood lay San Angelo, the county seat of Tom Green. Sherwoodites had to drive that distance to do county business, so Sherwood urged the state to make them a part of their own county. This event happened in March of 1889. The new county named Irion was born. Soon the election of county officers took place in Sherwood to determine who would lead this new county.

The Irion County business was conducted in existing homes and public buildings



until the county constructed a two-storied jailhouse in 1890. It had cells and a few rooms for officers but was only a miniature of the building they needed. One cell occupant in 1892, James Wilson (or Warren), noticed a pretty woman named Mrs. Taylor walking under his cell window. He had previously tried to talk to her when her husband was away at work, but she avoided him. When James became an occupant of the Sherwood jail, he sang songs to her when she walked down the street near the jail on her way to the Post Office. He sang loud enough to disturb the peace, so Mrs. Taylor complained to the Sheriff. When he was

reprimanded, James switched to throwing paper notes to her as she passed. The Sheriff couldn't stop this star-crossed lover. Finally one day a mysterious person entered the jail during lunch hour, and while no one noticed, they shot James. Most everyone concluded that Mrs. Taylor had slipped into the jail and killed him. But since no one actually saw the shooting, Mrs. Taylor was never charged with his murder.

Soon Irion County began construction of a large two-storied limestone courthouse, which had six offices and an impressive jury room upstairs. The jail was about 25 feet from the south door of the new building. The courthouse was finished in 1901, just in time for a land rush in 1903. Seventy-six sections of land owned by the State of Texas in Irion County was released for citizens to buy. At a price of one dollar per acre for pasture land and one dollar fifty cents for land joining Spring Creek, purchasers had forty years to pay off a 3 % loan. Everybody in the state seemed to want this cheap land. The town was filled with visitors (Cont. on p. 8)



From the President

Hello WTHA Members,

It is an honor to serve as president of the association this year. Since the outstanding conference in Alpine at the end of March, 2012, the most exciting thing I've learned is that WTHA members are everywhere. One such member caught me parked in the driveway to his ranch while I was writing down the text on a Mackenzie Trail marker. Whether arm-chair historians, boots-on-the-ground researchers, or professional historians, we are "kindred spirits," as another member pointed out recently at the Spur arrow dedication of the Quanah Parker Trail.

Perhaps the most surprising thing I've learned is how complex a simple organization like ours is. As I have been exposed to the inner workings of this group, I have been impressed with the unselfish contributions that are made to keep the organization running smoothly. Our Executive Director does a wonderful job of keeping us informed of events happening in our broad region and taking care of the everyday business. He guides the officers and committees dealing with finance, yearbooks, a newsletter, a website, West Texas history, awards, and the social media, among others. As one conference ends, the planning for the next one is almost complete.

A third amazing item I have learned is that one may attend a history conference every weekend and still miss some. April and May were two fantastic months filled with history conferences and projects as I promoted WTHA and made many new friends. Old friends from the Midland Archeological Society invited me to the Southwestern Federation of Archeological Societies meeting at Iraan where I heard papers given by several WTHA members. The next weekend, J. Tillapaugh invited me to the Petroleum Museum in Midland to hear some very interesting papers delivered by the Permian Basin Historical Society. That time of fellowship with history buffs was followed by Bob Alexander's invitation to come to the Scurry County Museum in Snyder for a seminar on Texas Justice, where I had the pleasure of sitting on the coat of Donaly Brice (by accident.) Naturally, I had to come home from each meeting with a book or two.

Our WTHA sessions at the New Mexico Historical Society's conference in Santa Fe were well received with papers from several WTHA members. We took some good-natured ribbing from our neighbors to the west. It seems they are still sensitive about the Texan-Santa Fe Expedition and a few other little episodes in our history. It was all in fun, though, and they seemed delighted with our interest in their centennial celebration.

Also in May, several WTHA members assisted Sam Watts with his second inquiry into the location of the Battle of Blanco Canyon and utilized the research facilities at the Southwest Collection in the pursuit of clues. Personnel at the SWC have been extremely helpful also in finding sources for historical commissions to use in documentation for the Quanah Parker Trail. Twenty-six counties in the Texas Plains Trail region have completed their documentation on the presence of Quanah and/or the Comanches and forty-one giant arrows have been placed to draw attention to that historical significance. These arrow dedications present excellent opportunities for me and our Executive Director Tai Kreidler to visit with WTHA members and recruit new ones. At Spur he had an inquiry from a member about purchasing a full set of yearbooks!

The 90th Annual Meeting in Wichita Falls on April 5-6 is shaping up as a trail-blazing conference that will include presenters, not only from West Texas, but also from Oklahoma, New Mexico, East Texas, and the Big Bend. Troy Ainsworth, the program chairman, has already received his first proposal for a paper, "The Jones-Plummer Trail." So save the date and plan to join us on the Old Western Trail for the spring roundup!

Marisue Potts, Matador

Looking Back . . .

Excerpts from "The 1926 Meeting" by John R. Hutto, published in the 1926 *West Texas Historical Association Year Book*.

The West Texas Historical Association which convened in Abilene, May 6th of this year met under weather conditions unfavorable to a representative attendance. Rain fell the day before and throughout the morning session, and though the attendance was confined to local people and to those who came by train, about 100 were present. . . .

Judge R. C. Crane's criticism of Miss Scarborough's book, *The Wind*, showed his thorough knowledge of pioneer conditions in the West. He thinks the author does injustice to the early settlers, especially to the cowboys. Objection was also made to the author's continued reference to the excessive blowing of the wind, but some of the ladies present took issue and insisted that the wind does blow in Western Texas. The Association was also favored by an address from Dr. John C. Granberry of the Texas



Quanah Parker Trail Arrow in Lubbock.

Technological College at Lubbock. Dr. Granberry discussed the necessity and possibilities of a West Texas historical association.

Law and order in the West during the early period was discussed by Judge Fred Cockrell. . . . The nature of the cases filed in court during the early days was usually for cattle theft or for murder. There was some land litigation, but the cattle man was usually fair minded and was disposed to settle his troubles amicable if possible. There was little of the ruffian spirit that so often characterized military posts and buffalo camps. Arms were rarely carried, except for killing game. Yet, after killing Judge Morris on the bench at Seymour by the Bill Brooks gang, the court and prosecuting attorneys usually went well armed. Many were of the type of Judge C. V. Cockrell [the presenter's father] who held court during the week and preached in the same building on Sundays.

The Association accepted a very hearty invitation from Stamford . . . to meet there for the 1927 session. The program under consideration is to be the best yet rendered by the Association.

Jim Shaw, The Delaware

By Rupert N. Richardson

[Condensed from the 1927 Year Book.]

It is a far cry from Tammany Hall to Jim Ned Creek in Coleman County. Yet the same Indian confederacy furnished both names; Tammany Hall after Tamenend, a great chief of the Delaware during the period of the Anglo-American colonies, and the creek after a famous scout of the same name. The ancestral home of the Delaware is the basin of the river that bears their name. They belonged to the great Algonquin family; and, since they occupied the central home from which most of the cognate tribes had diverged, they were universally accorded by all the other Algonquin Indians the respectful and affectionate title of "grandfather."¹ Through the combined pressure of white men and their red neighbors, the Delaware groups were pushed westward and ever westward, first to the headwaters of the Allegheny, thence to Eastern Ohio, and thence across the Mississippi River into the Spanish country. It was about 1789 that a part of them, with the permission of the Spanish government, located in Missouri, and afterward in Arkansas. Those who located in the Southwestern region were closely tied with the Shawnees. By 1820 two bands, composed altogether of some 700 souls had located in Texas. However, it seems that few if any of the members of those bands remained in Texas; for in Houston's second administration, when he needed some trusty scouts to enable him to establish terms of peace with the hostile tribes of the Red and Brazos region, he called on former Governor Butler, of South Carolina, then United States Indian Agent among the Cherokees in the Indian Territory, to send him aid. Governor Butler dispatched Jim Shaw and John Conner, Delawares, with their parties to his assistance.² From this time on the story of the Delaware scouts is inseparably linked with the history of the Indian relations of the Republic of Texas, as well as with that of the United States government in Texas after annexation. There was scarcely an Indian council held but that the Delawares were present as interpreters, few scouts were ever sent out except they guided them, and scarcely a single Indian agent or diplomat made a journey to the wild tribes without the protection and guidance of faithful Delaware scouts.



A sculpture in Fredericksburg by Jay Hester depicts Baron von Meusebach passing the peace pipe to the Comanche Indians.

Of the Delawares in Texas, three stand out as prominent and picturesque figures, not only because of the adventures and romance associated with them but because of the inestimable contributions they made to the advancement of civilization through their aid in the pacification and conquest of the wild border tribes. Although he was less prominent among his people than John Conner, Jim Shaw has been chosen as the subject for treatment in this paper. Conner was the leader of his tribe, and evidently acquired property; Shaw, on the other hand, remained to the end a scout, a man who performed great tasks himself, but who does not appear ever to have directed the efforts of others to any great extent.

We cannot say where Shaw was born, but we do know that in 1841, when President Lamar's ill-fated Santa Fe expedition made its way along the upper Red River region, Jim was then a grown man and had established contacts with the Indian tribes of that region and knew its topography to perfection. However, it must not be understood that he accompanied the expedition; indeed, if he or other scouts of his ability had guided it its history might have been far different. But in 1843, after Shaw had been sent to Texas to aid President Houston, he, together with John Conner and Jim Second-Eye (all Delawares), was appointed by President Houston as guide and interpreter for an expedition to secure a treaty of peace with the Comanche. Col. J. C. Eldridge, Commissioner of Indian Affairs of the Republic of Texas, directed the expedition and he was accompanied by

Hamilton P. Bee. As the Eldridge party approached the vicinity of Red River they observed that the trail of the Santa Fe party, which they had been following, turned sharply to the west in the direction of a strip of timber which, as Shaw explained, was the Wichita. Here the Delaware related to Mr. Bee how some two years before he had happened to be in that vicinity when the Santa Fe party passed. He showed him the very copse of timber where he stood and watched the party make the fatal error of taking up the Wichita under the delusion that it was the Red. "If I had not been afraid," said Shaw, "I would have gone to their camp, and I could have guided them to a road that would have taken them direct to Santa Fe."³ Shaw told the Eldridge party a great deal about the streams of the country and appeared to be thoroughly acquainted with that region and the plains to the northwest.

In the autumn of 1843 Shaw appears again, this time as interpreter at the Indian council at Bird's Fort, on the Trinity; and in December of the same year he and Conner went with a small party with a commission from Pierce M. Butler, United States Commissioner, to Pa-ha-eu-ka, head chief of the Comanche Nation, the party taking with them a pipe of peace and an invitation to the chief to attend a council on Red River. The chief had just lost a favorite son, killed in battle, and according to the custom of his tribe, he would attend to no business but would stay in mourning until the grass came again.⁴ We are not furnished with the details about this journey, but one is inclined to conclude that it was a dangerous business for a party consisting of only three or four Indians and one white man to go to the lair of a gruff old savage chief under these conditions.

However, Shaw and others evidently got back from the Comanche village safe and sound, for in May 1844, he and Conner were acting as interpreters at the great Indian council and treaty convention held at Tahwahkano Creek, below where the city of Waco is now located. At this council Jim, incidentally, was used to identify a certain young Indian who was being taken to task in the presence of all the council for horse stealing. The Delaware scout evidently knew personally practically all the chiefs of the nine or ten tribes represented, not to mention the dozen warriors.⁵

In the late summer or early autumn of the same year, Shaw and Conner left the trading house on Tahwahkano Creek with instructions from Houston to find the Comanche wherever they might be and bring them in for a general council. They had not attended the council held in May preceding. This journey took the Delawares to the upper Clear Fork of the Brazos. The Comanche received them hospitably, but manifested considerable indifference about going down the Brazos for a council. While the Delawares were the guests of the Comanche, a humorous thing happened that illustrates the high tension that prevailed generally along the Comanche frontier. Some of the horses that belonged to Shaw and Conner had strayed away from their grazing grounds near the village. A young man, who was hired by them for the purpose of caring for the horses, went out to look for them. While he was out a company of young Comanche braves held a parade near their village preparatory to going on a raid into Mexico. In the course of his quest for the horses, the young man chanced to climb a hill from which he had a view of the Comanche parade grounds. He saw the hostile demonstration, understood their nature, and concluded that the savages had slain their guests and were holding a celebration in honor of the occasion. So, without making any further investigations, he set out straightway for the peaceful Indian villages down the Brazos with all the speed his horse could make. At the Kechi and neighboring villages down the river he was causing consternation by his report that the Comanche were on the warpath and might be expected to swoop down on their weak Indian neighbors at any minute, and his fright might have caused any amount of disturbance, but the fact that the two Delawares and their Comanche friends came down promptly and set things aright.⁶

A chronological account of our Delaware Indian during the period of his service on the Texas frontier from 1844 to about 1858 would grow tiresome through the very repetition of accounts of dangerous tasks performed. And, furthermore, the accounts we have collected would not enable us to do this without leaving certain gaps in the story. However, there are certain experiences that must be given notice if we are to appreciate his intrepidity, resourcefulness, and sterling worth. Perhaps the most dangerous predicament Jim ever wiggled out of was

an affair at the Comanche village on the San Saba in August 1845. In the company of Benjamin Sloat, Texas Indian Agent, and two other white men, Shaw went to the village of Mope-chu-cope. This chief and his braves were friendly and entertained their guests with the best fare that Comanche hospitality could provide. The horses of the visiting party strayed away and Shaw went after them, it being feared that they would turn up at some frontier post and cause the officials to think that their riders had been slain. It is interesting that these agents and Indian runners frequently worried about their horses getting away and returning to the post and causing alarm. The fact that they actually underwent dangers every day does not appear to have troubled them and seems to have been accepted as a matter of course.



While Shaw was away, the attitude of the Comanches changed, and his return did not improve matters. Buffalo Hump, another Comanche chief, and his party came in after a few days and it seems that their arrival tended to add to the general unfriendly attitude. They began to place guards about the tents of the visitors at night, and when the party proposed to leave they forbade it. A council or two was held and the cause of the difficulty was brought to light. During the preceding winter a small party of Delaware hunters had killed three Comanches on the Saint Mark. Now, none of the Sloat party had had anything to do with that, but Shaw and his brother Tall-Man (the latter had happened into the Comanche village with goods to trade) were Delawares; and hadn't good Comanche blood been shed by Delawares just a few months before. Thus it was decided that they must have the blood of these Delawares, and possibly that of the white men as well, added for good measure. Indeed the families of the slain Comanches were in camp, and they and their friends were making it difficult for the chiefs to restrain the young braves. After more councils were held the chiefs informed the party that unless they made some presents to the relatives of the slain men, these relatives would steal on the little party at night and kill them before the

chiefs could interfere and stop it. But the cool-headed agent and his Indian companions did not lose their poise. If they should yield too readily the Indians would exact too much of them in the way of presents. So they pretended to be indifferent and bargained with the Indians in good horse-trader style. Finally, as Sloat put it:

"Myself and Shaw Counzulted each other about the matter some time before we gave them eny satisfaction about the trouble which they got very imptient when we agreed to make the same presents if that would settle it forever which agreed it would . . ."

Fortunately Tall-Man had the goods at hand and the party bought their way to freedom with goods which Sloat listed as follows:

"6 ½ yds of square cloth, 4 butcher knives, 4 papers of paint, 4 looking glayses, 8 plugs of tobacco, 4 pound of powder, 8 bars of lead, 4 conton handkerchieff."⁷

Notwithstanding these occasional misunderstandings he had with the Comanche, Shaw had a great deal of influence with that nation. They trusted him and on more than one occasion expressed a preference for him over white men and other Indian scouts. Buffalo Hump once told Houston that any time he wished a conference with him just to send Jim Shaw to the plains after him; Shaw could find him, he said. On another occasion one of Mope-chu-cope's wives ran away. The chief had an idea that she went to the settlements, since at that time he was camped on the Colorado above Austin. He was much disturbed, for he loved his wife still in spite of her waywardness. So he sent in a runner with the request that notice be sent to all frontier points and that every effort be made to apprehend her. She must not be touched or harmed by anyone, he said; and when she was found, they should notify Jim Shaw. He would get her wherever she might be and take her safely back to her husband. Though it may not be a compliment to other scouts of the frontier it is a tribute to Jim that the wily old Comanche preferred him for such an undertaking.⁸

However, there were those who charged our favorite Delaware with gross misconduct. John H. Rollins, United States Indian Agent for Texas, in 1949, wrote in complaining fashion to Orlando Brown, Commissioner of Indian Affairs at Washington, that he was finding it well-nigh impossible to secure efficient scouts for his work among the wild tribes. Jesse Chisholm, the famous Cherokee scout had

removed to Arkansas; Jack Harry, an excellent Delaware, had died of cholera the year before; John Conner was working for a trading company for six-hundred dollars a year, and the government would not allow Rollins but five hundred fifty to pay his scout and interpreter; Jim Shaw, interpreter for Major Neighbors, the late agent, was at a military reservation on the Brazos River at a salary of six hundred dollars per annum; and, furthermore, he would not have Shaw if he could get him, for he knew him well. He was not to be relied upon, being "both a knave and a drunkard."⁹ However, in considering this estimate of Shaw's worth we must in fairness to the Indian take note of the fact that Rollins' attitude seems to have been to find something wrong with everything that his predecessor did. The fact that Jim had been guide and friend to Major Neighbors may have been sufficient within itself to prejudice Rollins against him.

Furthermore, the Indian who could boast of a fine gun presented by Sam Houston for faithful service, the Indian who had the utmost confidence of men like Thomas J. Western, Superintendent of Indian Affairs of the Republic of Texas, and Robert Neighbors, the scout so highly regarded by Hamilton P. Bee and S. P. Ross, the man whom buffalo Hump favored and Mope-cho-cope would trust with his wife, needs no special brief in his defense before the bar of history.

However, it is true that Shaw was somewhat addicted to the vice that cursed so many of his race. The most interesting account in this connection comes to us from the German scholar Roemer, who traveled extensively on the Texas frontier in 1846 and 1847. Roemer was with Baron von Meusebach, who, accompanied by Major Neighbors and the indispensable Delawares, was exploring the San Saba country with the idea of establishing a colony of German immigrants. One night when they were in camp high up on the San Saba near the old Spanish Mission where Menard now stands, the learned German was frightened out of his wits by awakening from his first doze of the night to see, in the dim light of the campfire, the form of an Indian crouched almost over him. After the instant of horror had passed Roemer collected his senses enough to realize that an Indian at night was like lightning—the flash you live to see never hurts you. The savage turned out to be a perfectly peaceful fellow and none other than Jim Shaw's servant. He explained that his master could not "enjoy the peace of the night" and was sorely in need of a little fire-water. The fire-water was supplied, and we may suppose that Jim found the "peace of the night."

This German writer also gives us the best word picture of Shaw that we have. In

describing the party as they left Fredericksburg in February 1847 for the San Saba country, he says, in substance:

"At the head of our party, on a beautiful American horse, rode our Delaware chief, Jim Shaw, a six-foot, handsome man. As one looked at him from the rear he had an entirely civilized appearance in his dark stylish coat, which he had purchased in a clothing store before leaving Austin, and his black, half-military, stiff-cloth cap. But as one looked at him from the front one observed the features and the brown skin of the Indian. Furthermore, one observed on close inspection that the European dress was not complete, for the leggings of deer-skin made up his dress below the coat."

One night on this journey, after the Germans had started a *singen-sang*, Shaw entertained them with some Delaware music. As he lay on his back and struck his abdomen with the palm of his hand tones came forth in rhythmical bursts which the Indians thought good, but which the Germans were not sufficiently cultivated in Indian music to appreciate.¹⁰

In 1854 we find Shaw on the upper Brazos, in what is now Young County, with his family. It seems that he accompanied Captain Marcy on his expedition locating the Indian reservations for which Texas had voted lands. At any rate he had been employed at Fort Belknap, and W. B. Parker, who accompanied Marcy on that expedition, referred to him as "our quondam friend." At this time Parker visited Shaw's camp and was impressed with the evidence of civilization he saw about the place. Although Jim was leading a Gypsy life with his wife and two children, there were two cats and some barnyard fowls suggestive of the home of white people. Most interesting was a mosquito bar in the tent and a fine side saddle for Shaw's wife. Shaw stayed in the Fort Belknap vicinity, and as late as 1858 we hear of his scouting for expeditions. In that year he impressed S. P. Ross, whom he accompanied on an expedition to the Red River country, with his dependability and wonderful knowledge of the country.

But it is in the death of this faithful Indian that fate worked an incident that in its irony can scarcely be paralleled. This resourceful man who had escaped a thousand dangers, who had traversed Texas from the Canadian to the Gulf, who had faced the fierce Comanche both as an unarmed diplomat and as a scout for military forces on dozens of occasions, who had been connected with practically every frontier expedition for a period of nearly twenty years, met his death in a commonplace accident. While building a house he expected to live in, he fell off of it and was killed.

Perhaps it is a questionable practice for the historian to moralize, but our subject here offers a tempting opportunity. Shaw was born and bred an Indian and an Indian he died. We can catch a glimpse of poetic justice in the fact that he was killed in the environment of the white man. The frontier was passing forever, and with it the opportunity for service for men of Shaw's type. In the wilderness and on the plains, in the midst of the elements, wild beasts, savage men and primitive conditions, Shaw could survive; but the trappings of civilization overcame him.

¹ Hodge, Frederick Webb. *Handbook of American Indians*. Washington, 1907, p.1385.

² Robert S. Neighbors, Special Indian agent, etc. at San Antonio to Chas. B. Mix, acting agent of Indian affairs, Washington, D. C. July 22, 1853. J. O. L. R. (No number). University of Texas photostat copies of papers of the U. S. Indian Bureau.

³ Testimony of Hamilton P. Bee in the Greer County Case. Office of the Supreme Court of the United States, Transcripts of Records, Number 3 Original: The United States Complainant, vs. The State of Texas, in Equity, Vol. 1, October Term, 1894, p. 939.

⁴ "Talk sent to Pa-ha-eu-ka head chief of the Comanche Nation, by P. M. Butler, U. S. Commissioner, December 11, 1848. (Place where written not stated.) O. I. A. L. R. W-145. University of Texas photostat copies of the papers of the U. S. Indian Bureau.

⁵ Proceedings of the Council at Council Grounds, Tahwahkano Creek, Monday, May 13, 1844. MS in the papers of the State Department of the Republic of Texas, Indian Affairs, 1844-1845.

⁶ Report of John Conner and James Shaw, (written) and witnessed by Daniel G. Watson, October 2, 1844. MS in papers of the State Department of the Republic of Texas Indian Affairs, 1844-1845.

⁷ Report of S. Sloat, July 12, 1845, MS State Department of the Republic of Texas, Indian Papers 1844-1845.

⁸ L. H. Williams, Indian Agent to T. J. Western, superintendent of Indian Affairs, June 23, 1845, MS State Department, Indian Affairs, 1845-1860.

⁹ John R. Rollins to Orlando Brown, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 0, 1849. O. I. A. (no number). University of Texas photostat copies of the papers of the U. S. Indian Bureau.

¹⁰ Roemer, Dr. Ferdinand, Texas, Bonn, 1849, 285 ff.



Rupert N. Richardson (1891-1988) helped found the West Texas Historical Association in 1924 and served as editor of the Year Book from inception until his death. He began teaching at Simmons College (now Hardin-Simmons) in 1917 and remained

associated with the university until his death. A well respected historian, he also was a fellow of the Texas State Historical Association and served as president in 1969-1970.

NEWS AROUND WEST TEXAS

Bill O'Neil was sworn in as the State Historian of Texas on August 22, 2012. He took the oath of office at the governor's reception office. O'Neil was also presented with a lifetime achievement award at the recent annual meeting of the Wild West History Association in Prescott, Arizona. In addition, he is working on an Arcadia book to be called *West Texas Cattle Kingdom* that will be published next spring.

Billy Hathorn has retired from Laredo Community College effective May 31, after twenty-four years as instructor of history and government. His Ph.D. is from Texas A&M University and he previously taught at Campbellsville University in Kentucky. His latest publication, "Otto Passman, Jerry Huckaby, and Frank Spooner: The Louisiana Fifth Congressional District Campaign of 1976" has been accepted in 2013 by *Louisiana History* in Lafayette.

Joe Specht, Glenn Dromgoole and **Jay Moore** are working on an Abilene anthology. As Joe Specht says, it will be "something along the lines of the Literary Cities Series that TCU Press publishes." "The focus of the anthology continues to be telling Abilene stories. We'll be using excerpts from memoirs, newspapers, histories, along with poems, songs, and the like to capture the flavor of the Key City from its beginnings to the present.

The University of Oklahoma has published **David Murrah's** *C.C. Slaughter: Rancher, Banker, Baptist* in soft-cover. The new book, originally published by the University of Texas in 1981, includes new photographs and a foreword by C.C. Slaughter's great-great-granddaughter Cynthia Slaughter Pattison.

Two books are being published by the **National Ranching Heritage Center** this summer. The first is *Viento* by **Dr. Scott White**. The book is the culmination of three years of research

and interviews about ranching and wind energy. The second book has a working title of *Getting by in Hard Times: Letters from the Pitchfork Ranch during 1938-1939* also by Dr. Scott White. The book is based on letters between the Pitchfork ranch manager, Virgil Parr, and the owners, Eugene and Gates Williams. The correspondence during the two years at the end of the Depression covered topics ranging from government programs and the grasshopper infestation to the governor's race in Texas and the beginning of the war in Europe. Both books will be for sale in the NRHC's Cogdell's Store or on their website.

Diana Hinton's article "The Seventeen-Year Overnight Wonder: George Mitchell and Unlocking the Barnett Shale," appeared in the June issue of *Journal of American History*. The article started out as a paper for the WTHA meeting in 2011.

Bill Neeley who authored a book on Quanah Parker is selling shares for his biography of Juan Seguin and for his screenplay on Quanah Parker. Those who are interested can contact him at billn@fidnet.com or 580-284-4639.

Joe Specht has been named the 2011 recipient of the East Texas Historical Association's Chamberlain Best Article Award for "Oil Well Blues: African American Oil Patch Songs."

Leland Turner, formerly of the history department at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford, OK, has accepted a position as Associate Professor at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas.

The **Fort Chadbourne Visitor Center/Museum**, "The Roberta Cole Johnson Building," is now open Tuesday thru Saturday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Admission is free and donations are greatly appreciated to help keep the doors open. Exhibits include Native American, Military, Ranching and Medal of Honor displays. Step inside a stagecoach and

enjoy the restoration of the fort buildings and some restored antique items from the Zappe bar and bank teller cages from the FNB of Ballinger.

Upcoming:

November 9-10, 2012 - Center for Big Bend Studies annual meeting. Every fall the Center for Big Bend Studies hosts a two-day conference in the Morgan University Center on the campus of Sul Ross State University. This year the Conference will be held on November 9-10. The conference brings together historians, archeologists, folklorists and other researchers studying the past and present of the Big Bend region and northern Mexico. Center for Big Bend Studies members will receive a registration form in the mail several weeks before the conference that offers a discount for CBBS members and a discounted price for early registration. Non-members may request a registration form by calling (432) 837-8179, faxing (432) 837-8381, or e-mailing cbbs@sulross.edu.

November 12, 2012 - John McCullough will be giving a presentation about the proposed Fort Sumner Army Air Field Museum at 5:30 pm in the Council Room at City Hall in Fort Sumner. For more information, call (806) 786-7018.

November 16, 2012 - David B. Gracy II will discuss "The Lost Littlefield Murals" and their connection to ranching at the National Ranching Heritage Center in Lubbock, Texas, at 7 p.m., with a reception to follow. For more information call (806) 742-0498.

February 13-16, 2013 - Southwest/Texas Popular & American Culture Association's Annual Conference in the Hyatt Regency Hotel and Conference Center Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Association is now accepting proposal submissions in all areas. Please visit the Subject Area Chairs page at www.swtxpca.org for full details on the various areas and particulars on proposal requirements for each area. Please review the areas and individual requirements prior to submission.

February 22-24, 2013 - Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering. The Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering is a two-day event celebrating the oral tradition of the working cowboy in poetry, stories, and music. Enjoy more than 50 performers in the classrooms and on the stages of Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas. For more information visit <www.cowboy-poetry.org>.

March 28-30, 2013 - 97th annual meeting of the Texas Folklore Society in Corpus Christi. Send paper ideas for the 2013 meeting in Corpus Christi to Program Chair Carol Hanson at <chastan@prodigy.net> or 807 Nafus St, Cedar Hill, Texas 75104. For additional conference information, visit <www.texasfolkloresociety.org>.

April 2-5, 2013 - Texas Association of Museums annual meeting in Beaumont, Texas. Theme for the meeting is *Fueling the 21st Century: Refining Action into Innovation*. For more information go to <www.prismnet.com/~tam/ContEd/annualmeeting.html>.

Exhibits:

Sep 20- Dec 15, 2012.

“Quanah and Cynthia Ann Parker: A Pictorial Exhibit of Their Story”

will be on display at the Fort Worth Central Library. The exhibit will be a significantly expanded version of the original traveling exhibit available for loan from the Lakes Trail Program. Adjacent to the Library's Gallery is the Tandy Lecture Hall which will be used for presentations on Comanche heritage. The exhibit organizers will be making tour guides available during the period of the exhibit. For additional information contact: Jill Campbell, Executive Director of the Lakes Trail Program (817-559-2288), Douglas Harman, (817-691-6322) and Clara Ruddell (214-693-5915). The Fort Worth Central Library is located at 500 W. 3d Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102.



In memory...

Dr. Ralph Raymond Chase died March 16, 2012, in San Angelo, Texas. Ralph was born on Jan. 3, 1923, in St. John's Hospital in San Angelo. He completed his B.A. degree at the University of Texas in 1943. Upon joining the U.S. Navy during World War II, he was assigned to the Civil Engineering Corps and was stationed in the Admiralty Islands as the U.S. planned the invasion of Japan. After the war he entered Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago, Ill., graduating in 1951. He took pediatric training at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago and moved to San Angelo in 1953. He joined the late Dr. Bob Finks' pediatric practice at the Clinic Hospital, later to become West Texas Medical Associates and San Angelo Community Medical Center. He was a member of the American Board of Pediatrics, American Academy of Pediatrics, Texas Pediatric Society, Concho Valley Medical Society, Texas Medical Association, American Medical Association, Tom Green County Historical Society and West Texas Historical Association.

Ben Procter, professor emeritus of history at TCU, passed away April 17, 2012, after a long and tenacious fight with Parkinson's Disease. Dr. Procter's work and research in the profession was noteworthy. His work on William Randolph Hearst has become a standard in the field, and his monographs *Just One Riot: Episodes of the Texas Rangers in the 20th Century*, *The Battle of the Alamo*, and *Not Without Honor: The Life of John H. Reagan* are seminal Texas history studies. He was 85.

Dr. Procter was a life member of WTHA, but to many he was one of the "touchstones" of the historical profession. Those who knew him will always remember him as a great supporter of others' endeavors, and also an honest critic of their work. He was a rigorous teacher and expected much from his students, but in return he provided them with great instruction, a true lesson in the craft, and intense

loyalty and devotion to their careers and productivity. Ben Procter's instruction never ended with the diploma. His close friends will no doubt miss his convivial spirit, booming voice, and fellowship.

Alexander (Alex) Soto Cano, a 36-year-old San Angelo native, died June 13, 2012, near Knickerbocker, Texas. In 2002, Cano won an award from the West Texas Historical Association for the best student paper of the year. Cano had been an instructor of English writing at Jiao Tong University in Shanghai, China, a position he accepted in late 2010. Prior to living in Shanghai, he and his wife, Ivonne, lived in Madrid, Spain, for a year, where they both taught English. Cano was a recipient of a Fulbright scholarship for his work in Madrid. The couple also lived for two years in Kyoto Prefecture, Japan, where they both taught English. Cano held bachelor's and master's degrees in history from Angelo State University. He graduated magna cum laude as an undergraduate. While pursuing his master's degree, he was named "outstanding graduate student in liberal and fine arts." During this time, Cano was an archivist with the West Texas Collection, serving as student archivist from August 2002 to August 2003, when he became university archivist. Cano was recently awarded a full fellowship to pursue a PhD in history at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee. He was looking forward to returning to the U.S. to be closer to his family.

THE CYCLONE

A Newsletter for members of the West Texas Historical Association

Editors: Jim & Becky Matthews

Published twice a year (Spring and Fall) by the West Texas Historical Association, Lubbock, Texas. Members also receive the *Year Book*, published each fall, containing articles, news notes, and book reviews about West Texas history. Annual membership fees are \$10 for students, \$30 regular, \$35 family, \$50 sustaining, \$25 institutional/library. All back issues of the *Year Book*, published since 1925, are available for \$15 each.

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

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Sherwood Courthouse

(Cont. from p.1) the day before the event, and men jostled all night for a position in the line to the County Clerk's office. An outright wrestling match continued the next day until all the land was sold. To everybody's dismay, the clerk had gotten the day wrong when the leases were terminated, so the episode played out again on Monday. Some different muscled men made their way to the front of the line and became owners of Irion County land that day.

A lot of bootlegging took place in the Sherwood area during prohibition. Some farmers may have grown corn for more reasons than to feed their hogs. One incident during this time involved a farmer west of town who made whiskey under his farmhouse. Sam Harkey had been the Irion County Sheriff from 1925 to the present, 1935. He arrested the whiskey maker and confiscated his brew. According to hearsay, Harkey stored the whiskey in the first floor of the jailhouse, and some county officials imbibed the spirits. Such action didn't set well with some Irion County voters. The Sheriff had a stiff opponent in the next county race, and when all ballots were counted, Harkey lost to John Boyd.

Not everybody in Irion County was happy with the courthouse location in Sherwood. A thriving town, Mertzon, was growing a mile away on the opposite side of the river. By 1911, the train track connecting Irion County with San Angelo had been constructed on the west side of Spring Creek. It bypassed Sherwood because the tracks would have had to cross Spring Creek twice to service Sherwood. Businesses as well as citizens began slipping away from Sherwood only to reappear in Mertzon.

The citizens of Mertzon called for an election to determine the location of the county seat of Irion. People living in Sherwood were

irate and the electioneering was fierce between the two sides. In April 1927, 286 people voted to move the county seat to Mertzon and 231 voted against. Since this tally lacked the needed two-thirds majority, Sherwoodites breathed a sigh of relief.

The battle between the two towns wasn't over. As soon as another election was legal, the question of which town was the county seat resurfaced. On September 7, 1936, another election occurred, and Mertzon won 453 to 222. In spite of the fact that a case against this election went all the way to the Texas Supreme Court, Mertzon won. Mrs. W. W. Carson bought the courthouse at a public auction April 27, 1937 for \$400. She was the wife of the former judge of Irion County from 1921-22 and County Clerk from 1901 to 1916. She released her ownership to the Sherwood Homemakers Club in May of that same year. The only time that someone lived in the courthouse was during World War I when Jack Stinebaugh lived in the courthouse and taught school.

The grand old building was used for large parties. Many dances were held in the upstairs court room. Local children remember hunting Easter eggs on the expansive lawn. In 1945, World War II was in full swing and Americans were collecting metal. The vacant jail was torn down so the steel cages could be used for the war effort. In the 1950s, the Sherwood Baptist Church held services in the courthouse.

In 1958 old timers who loved Sherwood decided to start a Sherwood Homecoming Association that met every summer. They had a picnic at the courthouse and cleaned the nearby Sherwood Cemetery. Eventually the Association was able to buy the courthouse. The yearly homecoming is still popular and recently repairs have been made to the grand old building. Give me a call at 325-949-7303 or bba7303@aol.com if you would like to see inside the courthouse.