The Crossroads of Music

Take me out to the Southwest Collection

The Sandra Scofield Collection

Upcoming Series: Treasures of the Rare Books Collection

So there's something to do in Lubbock...

Photograph from the Alan Munde Collection

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY Southwest Collection/ Special Collections Library 15th & Detroit, 806-742-3749, http://swco.ttu.edu
Cornerstone of the Crossroads

By Curtis Peoples

In 1999, the 76th Legislature of the State of Texas passed House Concurrent Resolution number 65, designating Lubbock and West Texas as the Music Crossroads of Texas. The West Texas region has produced a copious number of musicians, artists, and entertainers that have had an undeniable influence on music, art, and culture throughout the world. In the spirit of the House Concurrent Resolution 65, the Southwest Collection (SWC) at Texas Tech University decided to create the Crossroads of Music Archive.

The Crossroads of Music Project began in December 1999 when Brazos Studios, operated by Alan Crossland who had leased the studio from Don Caldwell, closed its doors at 1214 Avenue Q, the original Don Caldwell Studios location. When the studios closed, I was working in another special collections library at Texas Tech and I soon learned that all of the original master tapes had been moved to various locations that were not conducive to storage for audio materials. As a former employee of Caldwell Studios, I was familiar with the tape collection and knew the importance of preserving this invaluable anthology of West Texas music; thus I conceived an idea of a music archive at the SWC. After several meetings between the interested parties, the decision was made to move the tape collection to the SWC for preservation. About a year later I joined the SWC as a music archivist to initiate the Crossroads of Music Archive.

The first order of business was to create an advisory board to help facilitate the project. One of the original board members was Andy Wilkinson, who is now the Artist in Residence at the Southwest Collection and co-director of the Crossroads of Music Archive. Andy has also helped to bring in numerous music collections including Texas Shorty, Buck Ramsey, Nolan Porterfield, and David and Rita (Pecks Box), with more on the way.

The Don Caldwell tape collection is the cornerstone of the Crossroads of Music Archive. In July 1971, Don Caldwell opened his studio, which was primarily a music store at the time. In 1973, steel guitar player and producer Lloyd Maines began working with Caldwell and by the end of the year Caldwell sold the inventory of the music store and began to record full-time. In 1974, Caldwell started Texas Soul Records and began financing some recording projects and shopping the material to larger record companies. Terri Sue Newman, who had been a child singer on the Mathis Brothers Pickin' Time Show in Lubbock, began cutting tracks at the studio and eventually had a top 40 country hit on Cinnamon Records. Caldwell also financed Joe Ely's first demo, which enabled Ely to sign a record deal with MCA.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, creative forces flourished in the studio. Local artist Paul Milosevich convinced Lubbock native Terry Allen to come back and cut one song for his upcoming album. Allen, impressed with the working atmosphere at Caldwell Studios, decided to cut the entire album “Lubbock on Everything” at the studio. In a 1990 Rolling Stone article titled “The Seventies: 50 Essential Albums of the Decade”, “Lubbock on Everything” is listed in the number 40 position with Joe Ely’s “Honky Tonk Masquerade”. Apparently, the work on the album had a significant influence on other projects recorded at Caldwell Studios. According to former Caldwell Studios engineer Alan Crossland, there seemed to be a noticeable difference in the sound of recordings in the studio before and after the album. Formed in 1976, the Maine Brothers Band also began recording albums at Caldwell Studios. In the early 1980s, the band signed with Mercury Records and had several songs make their way onto the country charts.

In the 1990s, Caldwell began to spend more time on talent management and opened the Cactus Theater. With his time devoted to promoting West Texas talent and managing the Cactus Theater, Caldwell leased his studio to his long-time engineer, Alan Crossland. Don Caldwell currently operates his music production company at 1805 Texas Avenue and still produces music recordings today. He has now been in the recording industry for 34 years, one of the longest operating studios in the country.

Many genres of music comprise the Don Caldwell Collection, such as country, rock, jazz, tejano, and gospel. The collection contains mostly analog tape, numbering approximately 4650 reels. The analog collection consists of two-inch multi-track tapes, one-inch multi-track tapes, and quarter-inch master tapes. Because the quarter-inch are in danger of being lost, the goal is to transfer them first and then to preserve the master recordings. Many of the quarter-inch tapes exhibit hydrolysis — also known as sticky shed syndrome — a problem inherent in much of the magnetic tape from the 1970s and 1980s. Sticky shed is a problem in which ambient moisture builds up in the magnetic tape making the tape sticky and rendering it unplayable, unless properly treated.

The Southwest Collection considered outsourcing the transfer of the tapes, but decided instead to conduct the transfer in-house. The main reason for the decision is so we can work closely with Don Caldwell and other engineers who worked on many of the projects to gather as much data about the tapes as possible. To transfer the tapes, the SWC bought a state-of-the-art audio transfer system and plans to preserve the recordings in a digital format. The audio archiving system is also being used for other music collections, as well as the Southwest Collection’s rich oral history collection.

The Crossroads of Music Archive is looking for any donations (i.e., music recordings, posters and handbills, photographs, oral histories, etc.) relating to music in the West Texas area, as well as the Southwestern United States. Please contact us if you have materials to donate or would like to help the project in some other manner.

Photograph by Emily Nash, MC #468


YELLOW HOUSE
The Sandra Scofield Collection

Texas-born Sandra Scofield, the latest writer to be included in the James Scottli Family Collection in Literature, Community and the Natural World, TTU's premier collection of manuscript materials by prominent writers of place, recently sat down with Dr. Bill Tydeman and Dr. Diane Warner for an informal discussion of her novels, her teaching methods, and her writing process. She was in town to visit her aunt, Mae Perkins, and to attend Literary Lubbock, a night of good food, fine wine, and literary conversation held to benefit TTU Press at the Cap Rock Winery. Though Scofield left Texas in the early 1960s, she has remained close to her aunt and has visited Lubbock numerous times over thirty years.

Scofield was born in Wichita Falls, attended schools there and in Ft. Worth and Odessa, before enrolling at University Of Texas-Austin. Even though she lived in Oregon for almost thirty years, many of her novels are set in West Texas. Although she said she would not call herself a feminist writer, Scofield acknowledges that her work deals with women and their families and often explores both the stresses and resiliency of families dealing with geographic and emotional separation. Scofield occasionally teaches writing at workshops across the country and these experiences teaching aspiring writers led to her forthcoming book The Scene Books (Penguin 2007), which she calls a primer for people wanting to learn how to write fiction. She received a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in 1991, the same year her novel, Beyond Desiring, was a finalist for the National Book Award. The novel, A Chance to See Egypt, received the Best Fiction award from the Texas Institute of Letters in 1997. Her most recent publication, Occasions of Sin: A Memoir, was praised by Art Winslow of the Chicago Tribune for "its gripping sense of honesty and its plain-spoken, understated pain."

The Sandra Scofield Collection, which is now open for research, offers many research opportunities for students and scholars interested in women's studies, literature of place, and creative writing processes and techniques. The collection contains a variety of materials detailing Scofield's literary and scholarly works, including published and unpublished novels, short stories, poems, reviews, and plays, as well as photographs, workshop and conference materials, and academic work and teaching materials.

For further information on the Scofield manuscript collection and other literary collections held at the SWC/SCL, please contact Dr. Diane Warner, diane.warner@ttu.edu. Scofield also maintains a website at sondrascofield.com.
Take me out to the... Southwest Collection

By Monte Monroe

The Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library (SWC/SCL) is the archive of record for the National College Baseball Foundation. The sports archive initiative at the Southwest Collection hopes to make the institution the top sports archive in the country. For example, on a daily basis, the Southwest Collection (in conjunction with the National College Baseball Hall of Fame) is collecting materials from over 285 Division I teams nationwide. The materials include: manuscripts, media guides, weekly press releases, and coaches reports. Historic materials from the various teams encompass photographs, signed bats, signed baseballs, championship rings, jerseys, and hats. The manuscript and artifactual materials pouring into the SWC/SCL are creating a superb record of college baseball history that will be of great national importance for students and scholars of sports history.

The Southwest Collection has interviewed most of the coaches and staff of the Big 12 baseball teams who have played in Lubbock this season. All are impressed with the facilities of the Southwest Collection, along with our commitment, and all have promised their full support.

Indeed in April, Professor Sam Regalado from California State University at Stanislaus presented “Invisible Baseball: Japanese Americans and their Game in the 1930s” in the Formby room at the SWC/SCL. In addition, the SWC staff, working in collaboration with the Lubbock Convention and Visitors Bureau, recently traveled to Colorado where a formal presentation and successful bid was made at the North American Society for Sports History (NASSH) Conference. The annual conference for NASSH will be held in Lubbock in May, 2007, where members, including academicians and graduate students from as far away as Australia, can use the Southwest Collection’s wonderful sports archive and perhaps get a taste of West Texas culture and sport.

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