
Wichita County Archive News

August 2014

News Items

We may have enough money soon to place another historic marker. Let's start making a list of people, places or events in Wichita County that need to be marked. **What do you think needs to be marked for posterity?**

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Mayre Tubbs Wiseman was a long-time member of the Commission who passed away July 19 at the age of 94. Mayre and I started the actual work of the Archives together in 1995. Although a native of Haskell, she quickly adapted to learning the history of Wichita County and served the Historical Commission as Secretary for several years. The Commissioners' Court recognized her service to the Historical Commission and the Archives with a Proclamation in 2003. We will always appreciate Mayre's contributions to the Archives and remember her fondly when we see her neat printing in the records.

Proposed Mission Statements

WE WILL VOTE ON THESE AUGUST 7TH

The Wichita County Historical Commission promotes an interest in county history by researching and dedicating historical markers, preserving history in the WC archives, and educating the public as to the historic significance of structures, people, and events in Wichita County.

The mission of the Wichita County Archives is to collect, preserve and catalogue paper items relevant to the history of Wichita County and make them available to the public.

Robert's Column - Continued

America's best plane was the North American P-51 Mustang. Many North Texans helped build them at The North American Plant in Grand Prairie. They were and are a superior aircraft. North American first built them under British contract beginning in 1940. The early models were powered by an Allison V-12 and had a top speed of 370 mph. Later models, powered by a Packard built Merlin V-12, used a four blade propeller and could hit a top speed of 445 mph. They were long distance and very maneuverable. When the US entered the war, they, along with the earlier P-40, became a stable fighting force for American flyers. The less capable P-40 ended up being used mostly in The Pacific Theater. This is not to lessen the role of the P-40. We mostly remember it as the aircraft of The Flying Tigers. It had a hard time competing with The Japanese Zero. The skill of The American Pilots was sometimes the difference, not the aircraft. Its top speed was 366 mph. It did provide good protection for the pilot. The Zero did not. Japanese designers deliberately sacrificed safety for speed and maneuverability. The Zero was not designed for high altitudes. When The Navy Corsairs entered the Pacific war, this gave Pilots such as Greg "Pappy" Boyington of Black Sheep fame a decided advantage. The Zero's top speed was 358 mph, but it could turn on a dime.

The airplane that probably won the war was not a fighter, but a bomber. The Boeing B-17 was a war machine. Heavily armed, it could carry huge pay loads of bombs to the places that hurt the Germans most. It was a precision bomber. With its bomb sight, no other bomber in the war was even close to its capabilities. It was tough and could fly with amazing amounts of its construction gone. The men who flew in them knew what a great aircraft they were. War is bad, but it is amazing what great achievements it leads to.