



# PRESERVATION NEWS

August 4th, 2016

Newsletter of the Wichita County Historical Commission

Volume LXXIV

Robert Palmer, Chairman

## Wichita County Archives

720 Indiana Avenue

Wichita Falls, Texas 76301

Telephone 940-763-0020

Hours of Operation: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10:00am - 12:00pm & 1:00pm - 4:00pm

E-mail Address - archives@co.wichita.tx.us

http://www.wichitacountyhistoricalcommission.org/

### AGENDA FOR MEETING

Lunch at 11:30am Meeting 12:00 Noon - 1:00pm

1. Call to Order

2. Introduction of Guests

3. Business

4. Program

5. Adjourn

**Monthly Meeting:** Location: Luby's. Price for the luncheon is **\$10.00** each which includes: one meat, salad, vegetables, drink & dessert. Please bring the correct change. **RESERVATIONS NO LONGER NEEDED**

### PROGRAM

What are the responsibilities of County Historical Commissions? Becky Trammell

#### From the Desk of Robert Palmer -

If your radiator leaks and your motor stands still. . .

Give her Hadacol and watch her boogie up the hill!

She'll do. . . The Hadacol Boogie!

When we think of what makes up history, we usually focus on people, events, facts, and things written on paper. History is also memories, memories of those things plus memories of sounds, smells, and even tastes. Remember Mama's Sunday chicken fried in lard, with lots of salt and pepper. Remember the barber shop, the smell of hair tonic and freshly shined shoes. Remember walking in a grocery store and smelling fresh ground coffee. History is also sounds. Growing up in an oil field town, we were used to the sound of pump jacks and drilling rigs. Visiting relatives from the city couldn't sleep because of the sound.

The late 40s and early 50s were BT, before television. Small towns were alive with summer time activities. In Electra each summer, on the west side of town, was the site of the Hadacol Medicine Show. They set up on the parking lot of the Red Roof Dance Hall. Hadacol was the creation of a promoter named Dudley LeBlanc. LeBlanc had been a Louisiana politician, but, mostly, he was a promoter. He had promoted a number of mildly successful products, but hit the gold mine with Hadacol. He stole the formula from a nurse and added a few of his own elements. It did have many vitamins, but it also had honey, diluted hydrochloric acid, and 12% alcohol. The mixture did make people actually feel better. Most people, at that time, had grown up on Watkin's Liniment, which you rubbed on your skin, and made sore

muscles feel better, so buying a patent product was nothing new.

LeBlanc advertised the product on virtually every available media, but he became wildly successful when he decided to take it to a mainstream small town America through Medicine Shows. Medicine Shows had been around since after the Civil War. They featured a lot of music: fiddle players, banjos, and the very popular one man band (a person who played a variety of instruments at the same time). LeBlanc started small and grew and grew. At its peak, the Hadacol Caravan had 130 vehicles and played to thousands of people throughout the small-town South. At one time, Carmen Miranda, Mickey Rooney, Bob Hope, Lucille Ball, Roy Acuff, and Minnie Pearl played in the shows. At that time, Hadacol was the largest advertiser in the US behind Coca Cola.

LeBlanc didn't always pay his taxes. As a matter of fact, he very seldom paid his taxes. The Internal Revenue Service took notice. LeBlanc sold the company. The new buyers were stunned to discover that they had assumed the tax debt.

Hadacol was not the only summer sound. Tent revivals were everywhere with their music and dynamic preaching. Baseball was very popular. Touring teams like Eddie Finger played local stars and made them look bad. Finger would kneel at second base and pitch blindfolded. Nobody could touch his pitches. Circuses toured. Our area had the D. S. Dudley Circus from Mankins.

Sometimes the best sounds of summer were to just sit in your yard after dark and listen to the crickets.

#### QUESTION OF THE MONTH

*What do Otto Barker, Barlow Hill and Stanley Williamson have in common?*

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### August 2016

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Surprise, surprise! Wichita County has been approved to receive another “Undertold Marker” from the Texas Historical Commission. This one honors Dr. Annie Davis Roark. This is our third Undertold.

Wichita General marker is now replaced.

Wichita County is rapidly approaching 100 historical markers. Five are stone markers, placed earlier than the state program was founded; the rest are Texas Historical Commission markers.

We hope to have a really big celebration for the 100<sup>th</sup> and submit that application this fall.

#### WHAT TOPIC DESERVES THIS SPECIAL HONOR?

Did you ever make the Saturday night drag on Kemp in your hot rod with your best girl or best guy by your side? MONTH will sponsor “Cruisin’ Kemp” on Saturday, August 6th. The day includes a car show on the east side of Sikes Senter parking lot and an escorted cruise down Kemp Street. To enter your “jewel” costs only \$20, so come on out!

And to get you more excited about the upcoming elections, MONTH will open the “Participating in Politics” exhibit during August.

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#### Wichita County Historical Commission Membership

What does serving on the Wichita County Historical Commission mean to YOU? After being appointed by the commissioner’s court, you attend the monthly meeting, hear an informative program, and enjoy the fellowship with other history lovers. Did you know there are **duties and responsibilities** connected to this county service? They include identifying historic resources, educating yourself and others about local history, and promoting historic/cultural sites in the area.

How can you perform your **duties and responsibilities** as an appointee of the WCHC? First determine what aspects of Wichita County history interest you. Next, channel that interest with the idea of protecting, preserving and educating.

Are you an organizer, a writer, a talker, a worker, or a walker? An organizer would be more than welcome to come to the Wichita County Archives and put your skills to work. A writer can write marker applications, articles for local and regional publications, and assist those who are working on applications. Talkers can make presentations concerning Wichita County history to local civic groups. The worker can start refinishing the multiple markers in the county that are so faded. The walker can check the status of the nearly 100 markers in Wichita County.

In 2015, 90 counties in Texas were recognized by the Texas Historical Commission with Distinguished Service Awards. Wichita County was not one of those 90. For this CHC to receive a DSA, it will require dedication and documentation. Are we up for it????

Members are up for reappointment in January. You are welcome to come to the meetings, hear the programs, receive the newsletter without a reappointment. Is this what you prefer, or would you like to do this AND help preserve, protect and educate?

Think about it!

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