

720 INDIANA AVE., WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS 76301



From the desk of Robert Palmer

Many adventurous and exciting events have occurred throughout the history of North Texas and Southern Oklahoma including Early Spanish exploration, the Texas-Santa Fe Expedition, the Marcy Mapping, the 1870s Red River Wars such as The Battle of 10th Cavalry Creek, The First Airplane Flight, Call Field, and much more. Few possessed the intrigue of “The Wolf Hunt”!

Although primarily occurring across the Red River in “The Big Pasture”, the hunt was a true Wichita County event involving many influential county residents with tremendous long-term effects on Wichita County.

The Big Pasture was designated Indian Territory, but, its future economic possibilities had everyone’s attention. Consisting of 480,000 acres of rich prairie and fertile land, the land had been reserved for grazing rights by the Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache tribes. It was opened for settlement in 1901. The tribes leased it out to large ranchers. One year after the Wolf Hunt, on June 5, 1906, the land was to be disposed of in 160-acre segments. Unallotted land was sold by sealed bid. Under the leadership of Quanah Parker, all exchanged funds were in “hard” money.

Some historians say the Wolf Hunt came about through Teddy Roosevelt hearing about Jack Abernathy catching wolves with his bare hands. Though a factor, the facts tell much more. On April 5, 1905, Roosevelt passed through Oklahoma on his way to San Antonio to attend a reunion of The Rough Riders. On April 8, 1905, he returned to Oklahoma to Frederick by a special five-car train. A huge crowd heard him speak in Frederick. Many pictures were taken and many meetings took place. A lot of people wanted the President’s ear. **Continued on Page 4.**

Wichita County Archives

Carol Rudd, Archivist

Hours of Operation:
Wednesday, Thursday,
and Friday

10:00am - 4:00pm

Wichita County Texas
 Archives is on
[Facebook](#)

Program

Jeremy Davis
Museum of North Texas
History Director

MEETING
First Thursday of the
Month
12:00 Noon - 1:00pm
Museum of North
Texas History
720 Indiana

Becky Trammell, Newsletter Editor

**Wichita County Historical Commission
Minutes - September 5, 2024**

Call to Order: Robert Palmer called the meeting to order at 12:10 pm.

Attendance Members: John Yates, Robert Palmer, Lauren Love, Douglas James, Russel Miller, Suzanne Darr, Medrith Collins, Carol Rudd

Attendance Guest: Dorothy Palmer, Pamela Miller, Rose Wallace, Jeremy Davis

Program: On September 5, The Wichita County Historical Commission took a field trip to Burkburnett to The Gilbert Creek Gardens located at 411 3rd Ave. If you missed the trip, please pamper yourself and visit this adorable shop that carries plants, flowers, locally made crafts, cute kitchen towels, endearing Honey Bee earrings just to name a few.

Blair Ramon and her mother Valarie Maxwell, have worked very hard to renovate and preserve the old Ice House where Blair's great grandfather worked. More work is to be done, but it will be a fantastic place for weddings, birthdays, reunions and more. Blair gives an outstanding tour of the building, pointing out what it once looked like and how they have restored it. Still requiring a lot of changes, but Gilbert Creek already gives a wonderful feeling of home. Hats off to Blair and Valarie!!

Approval of Minutes: The August minutes were approved unanimously by attending Commission members. Chairman Reports:

Program: The program will be Jeremy Davis, Executive Director of the Museum of North Texas History.

Cemetery: John Yates

Website: Becky Trammell and Elizabeth Hawley

Markers: Becky Trammell

Old Business: The minutes for June were approved unanimously by all attending Commission members.

New Business: October will celebrate two dedications. Lloyd Ruby marker dedication is Saturday, Oct. 19 at 3 pm. The second is for the Charlye Farris statue. More information to come.

Adjournment: John Yates made the motion to adjourn; Carol Rudd seconded. The meeting ended at 1:00 pm.

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

November: Orlando Sosa; December: OPEN

Wichita County Archives News
September 2024

What's going on at the Archives?

It was 10:30 am when a tall cowboy named Carter McGregor V came to the Archives asking if we had information about his family. I had to grin because I knew we have a great deal. For about three hours he sat at a table and read and took pictures of family. Carter kept on asking, "Where did you find all this?" As he was leaving, Carter asked if we had any information about the Barwise and Huff clans? "I'm related to them, too!" What a sweet gentle man. You are welcome anytime.

Twelve Daughters of the Republic of Texas came to the Archives Sept. 14. All of them had toured the museum before, but only a handful had been to the archives. I gave them a quick intro as to how we preserve and catalog donations. But I thought they would want to see two land grants that were in the flat file. One land scrip was presented to Thomas Toby from New Orleans, a privateer in the Texas Navy. He received 640 acres in 1863. Sam Houston signed the scrip. The second land grant of 640 acres was given to Elizabeth Stanley by Governor F. R. Lubbock in 1861. The next time you come to the Archives, look up at the huge 1924 map to your right. You will see the Stanley claim that butts up to the Red River alone the town of Burkburnett.

Ginger and I are still working on the Flat File. We are finding that some files were never recorded, some are in the wrong drawer and some have disappeared. The Times Record News file cabinets are coming along nicely. It is slow work but rewarding work to finally know what we have.

While cleaning out the kitchen in the museum, an apron was found that once belonged to Lita Watson. The writing on the apron had her name and this saying at the bottom, "Old Archivists never die...they just file away." Thank you, Lita, for your diligence and love of history.

Wichita County Historical Commission
Agenda - October 3, 2024

Call to Order: Robert Palmer

Attendance Members:

Attendance Guest:

Program: Jeremy Davis, MoNTH ED

Approval of August Minutes:

Chairman Reports:

Program: Douglas James

Cemetery: John Yates

Website: Becky Trammell and Elizabeth Hawley

Markers:

Old Business:

New Business:

Adjournment:

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The list of attendees gives a vivid image of what was taking place. The adventure of the hunt took place over the next five days. Evening conversations around the campfire would greatly influence the future of Southern Oklahoma, North Texas, and Wichita County. Picture Roosevelt, Quanah Parker, W.T. Waggoner, Guy Waggoner, Burk Burnett, Tom Burnett, Will Burnett, Jack Abernathy, several former Rough Riders, Governor Thomas Ferguson, Col. Cecil Lyon, Sloan Simpson, Gen. Samuel Young, Al Bivins, Cape Bill McDonald, S.B. Young, Texas Congressman John Stevens, Dr. Alexander Lambert (Roosevelt's doctor), C.B. Mchugh, Sloan Simpson, and Wichita County Cowboy and pioneer family member Phi Taylor chewing the fat around an evening campfire. All of these people were there for a reason. Not there, but very much a part of it all, were Joseph Kemp and Frank Kell. They would become very wealthy from what was being discussed.

Did they hunt wolves? Not likely. Wolves had long been removed from the area. There were many, many coyotes. Abernathy caught the coyote by extending his arm as he rode beside the coyote on his horse. The animal would try to bite his arm. He would run his hand down the mouth of the coyote, grabbing the lower jaw and the back of the tongue. Roosevelt loved it! Roosevelt is pictured with a huge rattlesnake. It was an exciting time!

What were the long-term effects? Oklahoma became a state in November 1907. The Big Pasture became open country. Abernathy's sons, aged 10 and 6, would ride to New York to be part of Roosevelt's ticker tape parade. Most importantly, Kemp and Kell, the next year, would begin construction of the Wichita Falls and Northwestern Railroad. The Big Pasture became a huge producer of livestock and grain. It flowed into Burkburnett, Wichita Falls, and Ft. Worth.

It all came about because of "A Wolf Hunt!"

**Texas Historical
Marker Dedication**



**Wichita County
Historical
Commission**

**Harold Jones Park
1400 9th Street
Wichita Falls, TX**

**Saturday
October 19th
3:00 pm**




Join us on Saturday, October 19th when the WCHC dedicates a Texas Historical Marker honoring hometown racing legend, Lloyd Ruby.