

PRESERVATION NEWS

MARCH 3, 2022

VOLUME CCLXVII

Becky Trammell, Editor

From the Desk of Robert Palmer

An often-heard comment this past week was "how bad was Super Bowl Halftime!" Usually followed by, "Those people don't know how to sing!" A good question is, "What kind of music did the Post-World War II generation grow up with that makes them creditable critics?" Let's explore the music. I can only speak for myself and my friends.

I was born in 1944 and television didn't arrive in North Texas until 1953. We listened to the radio. During the week my mother listened to soap operas, "Our Gal Friday" and "As the World Turns." Saturday night was a music night. The whole family listened to: "The Hit Parade," Gene Autry's "Melody Ranch," and "The Grand Ole Opry." "Your Hit Parade" was on radio from 1935-1963 and on television from 1950-1959. It had quality singers, such as Gisele MacKenzie and Snooky Lanson. They could sing the early Big Band and Pop songs but failed terribly when the early Rock songs hit the top.

The most heard singer in the late 40s and early 50s was Hank Williams. When I was very young, about five, we saw him perform at the Memorial Auditorium with The Louisiana Hayride. There were some of his songs my mother would not let us kids listen to like "Say Hey Good Lookin'" and "Your Cheatin' Heart." We loved The Sons of the Pioneers with lead singers Leonard Slye, Bob Nolan, and Ken Curtis...yes, that Ken Curtis, Festus on

"Gunsmoke." Leonard Slye, you may know better as Roy Rogers. The favorite female singer was Jo Stafford. She recorded a song called "You Belong to Me" in 1952. What set this early music apart from modern songs? Very simply, it was the poetic style of the lyrics and the melody of the music. Most early singers and all my friends grew up in church where you sang the wonderful old hymnals, much different than "the hum along" sung today. The Stamps Quartet performed in churches all over North Texas and in many summer tent revivals.

When television arrived, there were many musical shows: Perry Como, "Your Hit Parade," Dinah Shore, and many more. The "Singing Cowboy" movies included many quality songs. I particularly remember Jimmy Wakeley's "Don't Fence Me In." Television shows produced many songs kids would sing such as "The Ballad of Day Crockett" in 1954 and "Cheyenne" in 1955. In 1955, at Haven Park Miniature Golf Course, they played songs over the loudspeakers. They played "Whole Lot of Livin' to Do" by Elvis Presley. That was the first time I heard Elvis. I was with a church group and they were all talking about that song. Within a year Elvis would be "King" of a new musical movement.

The new songs were mostly produced as 45 rpm records. Most home record players played that speed but you had to buy the little plastic disks

(called a spider) to make them fit. The old songs were 78 rpm, the hard, thick disks. New singers appeared overnight. My cousin from Odessa liked Roy Orbison from Wink who had a record recorded in 1956 titled "Ooby Dooby." A very young singer from Lubbock opened for Elvis's 1955 Texas tour. His name was Buddy Holly. He hit the top with "That'll Be The Day" in 1957. The wild man from Louisiana, Jerry Lee Lewis, burst on the scene in 1957 with "Whole Lot of Shakin' Goin' On." My mother didn't like that record either. A young lady from West Virginia started recording in 1955 but didn't have a hit until 1957 with "Walkin' After Midnight." She was one of a group of women singers that included Brenda Lee and Connie Francis. Of course, she was Patsy Cline, perhaps the best singer of them all. There was also a host of Hollywood want-to-be's that hoped to cash in on the new musical movement. Most didn't.

(CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE)



Wichita County Archives

Bryce Blair, Archivist
720 Indiana Avenue
Wichita Falls, Texas
76301

940-763-0020

E-mail Address -
archives@co.wichita.tx.us
wchitacountyhistorical.com
mission.org/

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

Wichita County Texas
Archives is on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/wchitacountyhistorical)

Program

John Yates

The City of Electra
Throws A Party: The
Big Bash of 1914

MEETING

12:00 Noon - 1:00pm
AGENDA FOR MEETING:

1. Call to Order
2. Introduction of Guests
3. Business
4. Program
5. Adjourn



Wichita County Archive News - February 2022 - Monthly Report

Judith McGinnis contacted the Archives looking for photos and information on some of the old restaurants in Wichita Falls. She planned on doing an article on some of their famous recipes. Images and information for Piccadilly, Luby's, Underwood's, and Kouri's were sent to her. She ended up publishing a 1955 photo of the downtown Piccadilly and a recipe for Carrot soufflé. The article was in the Sunday, February 13th newspaper and she even gave the Archives credit for the photo.

Carol Rudd, one of our volunteers, has been working on placing the articles from the TRN Bicentennial Edition in a binder and indexing them. She also organized a collection of newspapers and memorabilia donated by Ginger Beisch. That collection pertained to the Electra High School Football State Championship team of 1985. We will bring that collection to the meeting for everyone to view.

John Yates discovered a very interesting collection of newspapers in the Archives. It is the Special Illustrated Edition of the Wichita Daily Times, dated April 9, 1909. John has digitized the Xerox copy of the newspaper, making it easy to research. The paper documents a detailed history of Wichita Falls and surrounding communities and appears to be targeted towards bringing outside business into our community.

The Burkburnett Museum contacted the Archives asking for a plat map of Burkburnett for their Black History Month Exhibit. A 1950s plat in our Archives was digitized and sent to them.

Wichita County Maintenance Workers were cleaning out the old Plat Office at the County Annex and asked if we wanted a large pile of maps and architectural plans. Naturally, we said yes and they brought them over. We have yet to go through everything they brought.

Nadine McKown from the Kell House came to the Archives to research the servants that worked for the Kell Family. Several names that worked for them were found in the City Directories. Additionally, those names were researched on Ancestry.com to give them a broader idea of who they were.

The spring historical marker cycle began on March 1st and extends to May 16th. According to the Texas Historical Commission, the cost of markers is increasing for this cycle. The exact amount will be determined at the April meeting of the Commission.

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE) Racial barriers fell to the music. We all listened to Fats Domino's "Blueberry Hill", Chuck Berry's "Maybellene," recorded in 1955, and Little Richard's "Long Tall Sally" from 1956. Elvis' version of "Long Tall Sally" was included in Arnold Schwarzenegger's hit movie, "Predator." In the mid-50s, when we first began to realize that dancing wasn't all that bad, "THE dancing song" was The Everly Brothers' "All I have to do is Dream." The appearance of The Beatles changed everything. Most boys in the 50s wore flat-top haircuts. If you played football, it was mandatory. Some tried to insert Elvis-type ducktails into the back of their flat top and inch their sideburns down. The ruse didn't fool coaches, especially those who were World War II Marines. It was a losing battle. The Beatles did record very good songs, lyrics, and melody. The Rolling Stones didn't.

So where do we stand today? There is some very good music out there. I particularly like Suzy Boggus, Gene Watson, George Strait, and Amy Grant. It just wasn't the Super Bowl Halftime show.

WCHC and MoNTH News

WCHC submitted its yearly report to the Texas Historical Commission. Thanks to everyone who contributed the information necessary to complete this report. We completed over 3600 hours of volunteer time to preservation of Wichita County history. During the month of March, we will personally present the report to the Wichita County Commissioners Court.

**The Legends Project-
Charlye Farris Exhibit
is coming to the
Museum.**

**Time to Renew your
membership.**