



# Preservation News

WICHITA COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Wichita County Archives

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[wchitacountyhistorical.commission.org/](http://wchitacountyhistorical.commission.org/)

Hours of Operation:  
Wednesday, Thursday, and  
Friday

10:00am - 12:00pm &  
1:00pm - 4:00pm

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

## Program

Ellen Jahnke  
Riverside Cemetery

## MEETING

12:00 Noon - 1:00pm

### AGENDA FOR MEETING:

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

Volume CCLXXIX September 1, 2023

Becky Trammell, Editor

## From the Desk of Robert Palmer, Commission Chair

History comes in many forms. Last month we discussed the history of dogs in Texas, especially among Native Americans. This month, more about animals. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service, as reported by two local television stations, has proposed making the Texas Kangaroo Rat an endangered species. This announcement probably was met by most people as unimportant.

The truth is just the opposite.

The proposal, if accepted, could have a direct impact on all people living in Wichita County and could impact a much broader audience.

What is the Texas Kangaroo Rat? The answer is tricky. For historians, the species has been in Wichita County throughout its entire human-populated history. It was very important to the survival of early Native American populations.

First of all, it is not a rat as we think of rats, slick-tailed animals that carry many diseases including Bubonic Plague. It is a clean animal living over much of North Texas. Forget your later years pictures of Comanches hunting buffalo on horseback, which occurred for a very short time. Before that, Native Americans ate a variety of foods they could obtain with their hands: squirrels, fish, turtles, freshwater mussels, and kangaroos rats. Close examination of Native American campground reveals many kangaroo rat bones.

They lived in shallow tunnels capable of digging out with your hands. Early county farm boys loved doing this and, sometimes, keeping the animals as cage pets.

There are two species in Wichita County: Dipodomys Ordii, found mostly along the

Red River, and Dipodomys Elator, located in the clay, mesquite pastures of southern and western Wichita County.

Ordii is common. Elators are very rare. That becomes very important in the proposal. Students taking the Field Zoology course at MSU Texas are required to trap and preserve as many mammal species as they can. They stuff the skin and keep the skull. A tour of the mammal collection at MSU is a fascinating experience. Much of it collected under the direction of Dr. Walter Dalquest.

The proposal lists the species as the Texas Kangaroo Rat. Which is it? Ordii or Elator? It doesn't say but strongly suggests it is the Elator. Why is that important? If it is listed as an endangered species, any agricultural activity that threatens its habitat is forbidden. They literally, could shut down most agricultural activity in Wichita County and the other four neighboring counties listed in the proposal: Childress, Cottle, Hardeman, and Wilbarger. This would greatly affect the future of farming and ranching in our area, and because of the importance of the products, much of anywhere these products are used. Our area produces a lot of food and textile products!

We've been here before, notably with the Horned Toad and the Lesser Prairie Chicken. Both of these were proposed as endangered species. In some cases, court actions were taken. Eventually, in 1977, the Horned Toad was listed as threatened – a lesser restrictive category. The ranching industry fought the Lesser Prairie Chicken proposal hard. In the end, it was listed as endangered but the exception for Land Owner Agreements. What is that?

(Continued on Page 2)

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**Wichita County Archive News - August 2023 - Monthly Report**

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August was a very busy month with 21 enquirers. Here are just a few.

Jessie Wilson, who lives at Lake Arrowhead, called to see what information and pictures we had on the history of Lake Arrowhead. He explained he is building a “man cave” and wants a big bulletin board filled with pictures, news articles, and information of the small town of Halsell that relocated due to the lake being built. Jessie and his wife spent over 3 hours sorting through what they considered to be a gold mine.

Matt Thiele has lived at Lake Kemp for 37 years. Over the years, he collected any and all pictures of the building of Lake Kemp and Lake Diversion. The pictures are spectacular. Obviously, Mr. Thiele is being pursued by many museums to have the collection. Right now he is weighing his options, but he is very open for the Archives to scan the photos.

After the August meeting, Robert Palmer, Bryce Blair and myself went to the Times Record News building. Our guide, Lynn Walker, told us to take what we wanted. And we did. Walker also gave us a tour of the massive printing presses. We really wanted to take the presses, but the darn thing wouldn't go through the door! Seeing the presses brought back memories of the annual school trip. Sadly, the plan is to auction off TRN. Sad to see the ol' girl go.

Richard Macpherson called from Ohio where he was cleaning out the family home. He explained that his grandparents worked for TRN. Richard is like all of us, he really didn't want any of the “stuff” but he didn't have the heart to put it in a dumpster. He called to ask if we wanted the memorabilia. Of course!! Who knows what treasures can be found.

John Tennyson of San Antonio is making a documentary about Charles W. Reid who came to Wichita Falls in 1913 and organized the National Bank of Commerce. In 1920 Reid merged with the City National Bank as director and vice president of the City National Bank of Commerce. Reid was president of the Wichita County Motor Club, member of the Maskat temple, the Elks, Country Club, University Club, Church of the Good Shepard and Chamber of Commerce. Reid held extensive oil interests in Wichita Falls and Randlett, Okla. He moved to Berkeley, CA in 1924 and died at the age of 60.

Iowa Park Historical Museum is making a Texas Oklahoma Fair exhibition. Jack Gilmore, Mabel Clapp Conner and Judy Holmes Gilmore found some outstanding pictures and new information they were not aware of. That's the best part of the Archives, you never know what you will find.

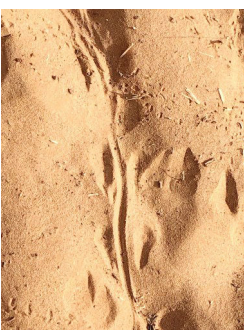
Dustin Nimz wanted to know who was the first Hispanic lawyer in Wichita Country. I was hitting a brick wall and remembered Hoover Rogers Law was across the street from the museum. Plus, I wanted to see the inside of the building. Grant Rogers was sure it was Robert Estrada, but he listed other names. I thanked Grant for his time and the tour of the building, and called the top of the list. Yes, Robert Estrada was the first Hispanic lawyer in Wichita Country in 1976 and in 1977 he took office as the Wichita Falls County Attorney.

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**From the Desk of Robert Palmer (Continued)**

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It allows the land owner to take conservation measures to protect the habitat and keep on utilizing the land for their



purposes. They had good lawyers. Horned toads are making a comeback. Sightings are getting more and more common. Lesser Prairie Chickens are seen occasionally along the Red River.

The Ordii live mostly in sandy fencerows. No-till farming kills most bordering fencerows, but again, they are quite common. It's a wonderful experience to drive to a location where they are found without your lights on and, then, turn your lights on. They are everywhere, leaping giant leaps in all directions. Elators live in mesquite pastures in Wichita and Wilbarger County, mostly owned by the Waggoner Ranch. See the problem?



Comments to the Proposal, electronic and by hard copy, will be accepted until October 16, 2023. Many questions are out there. Which species are they talking about? Just how restrictive do they propose to be?

The Proposal for the Kangaroo Rat has been paired with the Edwards Aquifer Blind Catfish, a species that, possibly, nobody has ever seen alive! Dead examples show up in water pumped from the Edwards Aquifer.

Yes, history comes in many forms!

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Wichita County Historical Commission

September 7, 2023      Agenda

Call to Order: Robert Palmer

Program: Ellen Jahnke - Riverside Cemetery

Approval of minutes for August 3, 2023 meeting: Sent to all members in newsletter.

Financial Report: Status of Account

Committee Reports:

Program Committee: Douglas James, Chairman

Cemetery Committee: John Yates, Chairman

Website Committee: Becky Trammell/Elizabeth Hawley

Marker Committee: Becky Trammell

Old Business:

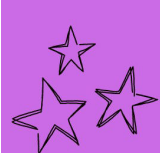
New Business:

Adjournment:

## MUSEUM NEWS



Remember the Museum during **Texoma Gives** on Thursday, September 7th.



Help the Museum of North Texas History  
Present, Preserve and Protect



The **Museum of North Texas History**, in its over 20-year history, has received many artifacts from our friends in the area. To present these artifacts to the public, we must preserve the integrity of the artifacts and protect them from damage over time.

Shelves, wardrobes, and special boxes are expensive. Forms to present

clothing are also expensive.

Help us present, preserve, and protect our artifacts.

[www.texomagives.org/organizations/the-museum-of-north-texas-history](http://www.texomagives.org/organizations/the-museum-of-north-texas-history)

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## Minutes – August 3, 2023

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**Called to order:** Robert Palmer called the meeting to order at 11:55 am.

**Attendance: Members:** Carol Rudd, John Yates, Russell Miller, Joreen Ludeke, Suzanne Darr, Don Burkman, Celia Moseley, Robert Palmer, Paula Elmore, Nadine McKown, Pam Morgan, Bryce Blair, Meredith Collins.

**Attendance: Guest:** Dell O. Darr, Kelly Reis, Josh Scott, Phillip Hargis, Diane Hargis, John Rollins, Dee Rollins, Leann Ray.

**Program:** Suzanne Darr gave an impressive account of her ancestor, Columbus Waller. Leaving Tennessee, Waller settled in Wichita Falls, bought a great deal of property to farm and sell. Eventually, he left Texas and moved to New Mexico.

**Minutes:** The July minutes were sent via Email and voted on at the meeting. They were accepted by Russell Miller and seconded by John Yates.

**Old Business:** Robert Palmer reminded that Electra High School and Hardin High School in Burkburnett will be celebrating their anniversaries in the Fall. Electra will celebrate Sept. 15, 2023 and Burkburnett on Oct. 26, 2023.

**New Business:** Air Force Blue polo shirts with the commission logo will be available in the near future. The shirts would be wore at dedications and special events.

### Committee Report:

**Cemetery Committee:** It was confirmed there are four Texas Historical Cemeteries in the county: Journey's End Cemetery, Clara Cemetery, Burkburnett Memorial Cemetery and Riverside Cemetery. Also, there are four on-line videos on Cemetery Preservation that are available. No other committee report.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm. Russell Miller made the motion and Joreen Ludeke seconded.

Minutes prepared by Carol A. Rudd

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## Bank Robbers Grave Marker

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The WCHC members have an opportunity to make suggestions for a new grave marker for the 1896 bank robbers. Here are some suggestions. What ideas do you have in mind? There will be a brief discussion at our September WCHC meeting.

Foster Crawford

Elmer "Kid" Lewis

February 26 1896

Here lie the bodies of two cowboys who became bank robbers and murderers. On February 25, 1896. they took the life of a young bank teller in a robbery of the City National Bank. They were tracked down by townspeople and captured on February 26, 1896. The outlaws were returned to town and later that night, a mob broke into the jail, took them back to the scene of the crime and publicly executed them. Crawford and Lewis are buried in a common grave near this marker.

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Here lie the bodies of two young cowboys who became bank robbers and murderers. On February 25, 1896, while robbing the City National Bank of \$410, they took the life of bank teller, Frank Dorsey. Tracked down by townspeople and Texas Rangers, the outlaws were captured and returned to town the next day. Later that night, a mob broke into the jail and hung the outlaws in front of the bank. The outlaws, Foster Crawford and Elmer "Kid" Lewis are buried in a common grave near this marker.

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Whether right or wrong, no mercy was shown on these two men as the vengeance of this community was quickly delivered for the horrendous crime they committed. May God rest their souls.



## Marker News

Markers commemorating **Spudder Park, George “Tex” Barringer, and Burkburnett Junior High School** have been approved and funded by the sponsors. We are waiting for potential wording for the markers from the Texas Historical Commission.

The Undertold Marker honoring the **Youth Opportunities Center** was approved. The narrative for the marker was submitted September 29th. Now, we wait for potential wording for the marker.

The markers for **Jimmie Kolp, Ralph Harvey, Jr., Lloyd Ruby, Providence Baptist Church, and Church of the Good Shepard** are all at the foundry. Arrival from there is anyone’s guess.

## Marker Vandalism



Again, a Wichita County Historical Commission - Texas Historical Commission marker west of Burkburnett has been vandalized. Robert Palmer reported it appears someone tried to steal the marker. The marker commemorating 10th Cavalry Creek, located about 14 miles west of Burkburnett since 1970, has been damaged by vandals. From the photo Robert took, the coupler on the marker is broken and the support pipe nearly cut in two at the base.

In the last few years, the Ghost Town of Clara, also west of Burkburnett, was sheared off at the base by vandals. Luckily the marker was not damaged, just the support pipe. The marker for John Hardin in Burkburnett was also damaged. The Clara marker was repaired by County Commissioner Mickey Fincannon’s workers. The Hardin marker was repaired by the City of Burkburnett.

The Texas Historical Commission does not support replacing stolen or damaged markers. Any repairs are the responsibility of the public of the county where the marker is located. The Wichita County Sheriff’s Department and the commissioners of the precincts in the marker area will be contacted.