



PRESERVATION NEWS

Wichita County Historical Commission

Robert Palmer, Chairman

Bill Steward, Archivist

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

www.wichitacountyhistoricalcommission.org/

Wichita County Texas Archives is on Facebook

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

Location: Luby's

Reservations no longer needed

Volume XCVI

Aug. 2, 2018

From the desk of Robert Palmer

Program

Robert Kadane - The Kadane Family, The Kadane Oil Company, and Kadane Corner

**“We didn’t know the times were lean
Round our house the grass was green
It didn’t seem like things were all that bad
I bet we walked a thousand miles
Chopin’ cotton and pushing plows
We learned to give it all we had.”**

**Cotton was short and the weeds were tall
But Mr. Roosevelt’s a gonna save us all.”**

The singing group Alabama’s song, “High Cotton,” reinforces the concept of the idyllic image of the farmer as a person who could handle the hard times, but still be the master of his own destiny. He didn’t worry about other people telling him what to do. That was mostly true until the Government got involved.

Again, Alabama’s song, “Song of the South” illustrates how the farmer began to think. The politicians care about what the farmer thought, because his voice was magnified many times. People care about food. The numbers on the farm were dwindling, but many town folk had ties to farming and they all liked cheap food. High food prices are a death sentence for a politician. During the Great Depression, the percentage of Americans who lived on a farm dropped 25 percent. Now the percentage is around 2 percent with only 1 percent working full time on a farm. A study was done of Erath County of Texas. Between 1910 and 1935, the number of farms dropped by 28 percent. The farm population dropped 35 percent during the same time period.

The first move to control farming came with the Land Act of 1820, otherwise known as the Homestead Act. Before that farmers got land by various means, some quite illegal. Now, a person could file on a 160 acre plot, prove it out, and it was his. The Morrill Act of 1862 produced land grant colleges and provided for agricultural research and education. Knowledge is good, but it is the beginning stages of control.

**“Papa got a job with the TVA
He bought a washing machine and a Chevrolet.”**

The Great Depression really got the government into farming. Prices for crops were low, even if a farmer could find a buyer. President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Agricultural Adjustment Act in 1933 which reduced supplies by destroying crops and animals. Many horror stories came out of how that was done. After the Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional, it was rewritten in 1938 as the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act. The good was providing funds for conservation. The Dust Bowl had almost devastated the countryside. The good, but, also bad, was the beginning of the subsidy programs, a system that farmers are still married to. Many acts followed. These included: The land lay-out programs of the 1950s, the National School Lunch Act of 1946, the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, the 1964 Food Stamp Act, the 1990 Wetlands Act, and many more. The result is, when a Farm Bill is being written, there are many voices and, sometimes, the farmer, at the table.

Again, “Song of the South” illustrates the way people began to view their life. “Why should I be working night and day in the hot sun and freezing winter when I can move to town and have all the nice things in life?” Most people raised on a farm can answer that in a hurry. It explains why, people whose family history was living on a farm, then moving to town, return to buy farm land as soon as they start making money. Even if it’s just a week-end farm, it is still a farm. Farms have a wonderful image of a perfect lifestyle. Memories of hoeing cotton from sun up to sun down in 100 degree plus weather make that memory not so pleasant.

**“Cotton on the roadside, cotton in the ditch
We all picked the cotton, but we never got rich...
Somebody told us Wall Street fell
But we were so poor that we couldn’t tell**

Question of the Month

What Biblical character got killed while riding on a mule?

Wichita County Archive News

August 2018

Fall marker cycle starts September 1st. Changes include requirement of the \$100 application fee “up-front” and an increase in the cost of the markers. The new marker fees will come out on August 1st.

North Texas Farm and Ranch (<http://ntfronline.com/>) has been meeting with Archivist Bill Steward on articles about Bill’s experience on the 1976 Bicentennial Wagon Train and an upcoming article on Pat Carrigan.

Museum of North Texas History News

MUSEUM IN THE NEWS

Both **Newschannel 6 (KAUZ)** and **Texoma’s Home Page (KFDX-3)** have highlighted current and upcoming exhibits at the Museum. On July 15th, Leanne Ray and Bill Steward talked with Sarah Hines from KAUZ about the developing interactive children’s exhibit. July 17th found Curtis Jackson from KFDX interviewing Bill Steward about the “View from Above” photography exhibit.

Wichita Falls Times-Record News’ Claire Kowalick interviewed Curator Leanne Ray and Board Member Becky Trammell about the interactive children’s exhibit coming to the Museum. The article appeared in the Saturday, June 30th edition.

TEMPERATURE IMPROVEMENTS

In case you haven’t heard, the Museum now enjoys air conditioning and has returned to our usual hours. Thanks to Judge Gossom, the County Commissioners, Ferguson-Veresh, and Texoma A/C. Also, thanks to all the staff and volunteers who suffered through the heat to keep the Museum open during our “hot spell.”

Dustbowl house near Dalhart, Texas by Dorothea Lange. From The History Place

Images from the 30s

From Smithsonian Magazine

