



# PRESERVATION NEWS

# Wichita County Historical Commission

Robert Palmer, Chairman

Wichita County Archives

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

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Newsletter Editor: Becky Trammell

Wichita County Texas Archives is on Facebook

## Volume CCVI

Location: Luby's Lunch at 11:30AM Meeting 12:00 Noon - 1:00pm

**AGENDA FOR MEETING: 1. Call to Order 2. Introduction of Guests  
3. Business 4. Program 5. Adjourn**

## August 1, 2019

### From the desk of Robert Palmer

### PROGRAM

#### Museums of Fort Sill

#### Frank Siltman, Director, Museums and Military History

Wonderful songs have been written, sung, and recorded about Texas towns: Houston, Abilene, San Antonio, Galveston, Ft. Worth, El Paso and, even, Amarillo. The songs about Wichita Falls are hard to find, but they are there!

practice, during that time period, for black singers to ride free on the trains to entertain the passengers.

Hank Snow's "I've Been Everywhere" lists Wichita Falls, along with many, many other cities. George Hamilton IV includes Wichita Falls, along with other Texas towns, in one of his classics. Wichita Falls does not lend itself to song lyrics; the poetic meter is just not there. It was mentioned in an early blues classic which led to one line from the song being included in other songs recorded by several very popular recording stars.

The line about Wichita Falls, from the song, took on a life of its own. Aaron Thibeaux Walker, better known as T- Bone Walker recorded "The Wichita Falls Blues" for Columbia Records in 1929. It included the line, "I walked from Topeka, Kansas, baby, into Wichita Falls", an obvious theft of Jefferson's line.

Blind Lemon Jefferson wrote a song called "Long Lonesome Blues" in 1926. It had the following lyrics:  
"I walked from Dallas, I walked to Wichita Falls,  
I walked from Dallas, I walked to Wichita Falls,  
After I lost my sugar, that wasn't no walk at all."  
Jefferson was born in 1893 on a sharecropper's farm in Freestone County. How he became blind is unknown. He became a very good musician. He played at many dances and picnics in the vast cotton country south of Dallas. Jefferson, eventually, wound up in Dallas in the fabled Deep Ellum District, a hotbed of blues performing. He signed with Paramount Records in 1925 and, eventually, recorded over 100 sides for them. He impacted many other country and blues artists. He was called "The King of Country Blues". Blind Lemon Jefferson was the first community based folk blues singer/guitarist to become a star on phonograph records.

Country Rocker Joe Ely in "All Just to get to You", wrote "I have run from St. Paul to Wichita Falls...all just to get to you".

Bob Wills grew up in cotton country hearing his black neighbors sing. He listened well. Wills recorded "Swing Blues #1" in 1935. As vocalist Tommy Duncan sings, "I walked from Dallas clear into Wichita Falls", Wills, in his style, interrupts with, "Good ol Wichita Falls, Yeah". Country great Merle Haggard included the song, under a different title, "Stingeree" in his tribute album to Bob Wills. It appeared in songs by many other artists.

There are other songs with references to Wichita Falls. Miranda Lambert in her song, "Wichita Falls", starts off:

"Alone in a booth, in the Pioneer Cafe'  
I'm strung out from the road....."

Shooter Jennings in "Busted in Baylor County", sings "to Wichita Falls by showtime". My personal favorite is actually about Electra. K.R. Woods, Red Dirt artist, whom I usually successfully taught in high school, wrote, "A Little West of Wichita Falls". The lyrics tell about ranching and the oil patch, two areas Kenny knew well.

There is a great song about Wichita Falls still waiting to be written.

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### Question of the Month

What singing group got rebuked by The Wichita Falls Chamber of Commerce because of their comments about Wichita Falls?

# Wichita County Archive News

## August 2019

### Monthly Report – July 2019

#### Financial Report – Speaker Fund

Balance from June 2019	119.50
Copies in Archives	1.40
Balance July 2019	120.90

-Kevin McClellan came in to research his mother's home at 1708 Huff. It was built in about 1920 by oilman and famous Shakespearian historian Charles William Wallace. The McClellans have an oil painting of Wallace in their home painted by artist Emil Hermann. They have kept the home in original condition as much as possible. Wallace was interred in one of the most ornate above ground mausoleums in Riverside Cemetery. McClellan was surprised to learn that Wallace has been extensively researched as a world renowned Shakespeare historian. A researcher from Canada wrote a play about Wallace and his wife in 2010. McClellan was surprised to see the archive has a copy of that play.

-Mike Moody came in to research the early baseball teams in Wichita Falls. He found that John Hirschi and P.P. Langford played baseball here in the 1880's. Mike will be giving a presentation on his findings to the North Texas Genealogical Assoc.

-Dick Kulka came in to research all the people that have lived in his home at 1908 Lucile. His home was built in 1919 and he is planning a 100 year anniversary celebration with all those names on display.

-Bill Steward came in to the archives for a visit and ended up purchasing six of our duplicate books for \$50. His check was deposited in the historical commission checking account at Fidelity Bank.

-Carolyn Patton came in from Houston to research her husband's grandfather, James H. Patton. James was an attorney that came from Amarillo to Wichita Falls in 1915. In 1916, he opened the Panhandle Bar at 619 Indiana and operated it until Prohibition. The reason he came to Wichita Falls was because Amarillo became dry.

-The Archives hosted a small group of elementary students from the Dexter School located in Big Blue. They learned about researching different topics in the archives and all the different types of records we keep.

-Ms. Pettijohn came in to research when her home was built at 1701 Tilden. Tom Medders was the first person to live there in 1926. She has a double lot with the garage in back being built first. Medders lived in the garage, then moved into the main house when it was completed in 1929.

## Museum of North Texas History News

**Lita Watson, one of the founders and long-time board members of the Museum of North Texas History, has officially resigned from the Board of Directors of the Museum. Lita served the Museum in a variety of capacities, including Museum Director.**

**Lita's dedication has brought the Museum successfully through many changes and we are most grateful to her.**

**The Museum of North Texas History wishes Lita the best in her retirement.**

### MARK SEPTEMBER 12TH ON YOUR CALENDAR

On Thursday, September 12th, all of North Texas and Southern Oklahoma will come together to support non-profits through **TEXOMA GIVES**. Also on that day, **The Museum of North Texas History** will have the Grand Opening of the Interactive Children's Exhibit. This project has been two years in the making and we are very excited to present this exhibit to the North Texas and Southern Oklahoma area.

**Watch for upcoming information about TEXOMA GIVES and our Grand Opening!**