



PRESERVATION NEWS

January 5th, 2017

Newsletter of the Wichita County Historical Commission

Volume LXXVIX

Robert Palmer, Chairman

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/

AGENDA FOR MEETING

Lunch at 11:30am Meeting 12:00 Noon - 1:00pm

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

Monthly Meeting: Location: Luby's. Price for the luncheon is **\$10.00** each which includes: one meat, salad, vegetables, drink & dessert. Please bring the correct change. **RESERVATIONS NO LONGER NEEDED**

PROGRAM

SURPRISE-SURPRISE-SURPRISE

From the Desk of Robert Palmer -

Before World War II, opportunities for women, after high school graduation, were very limited. Jobs were limited by the Great Depression. After the War, it didn't get much better. A large number of soldiers returned from service and entered the job market. Women, wanting to work in the business sector, had to stand out from the crowd. One way was to be better trained. Opportunities for men were likewise difficult because of the competitive atmosphere.

Most high schools offered typing, some shorthand, and some bookkeeping. Beyond that, there wasn't much. Wichita Falls was the exception in North Texas. It had Draughon Business College.

In 1879, Professor John Franklin Draughon saw the need for people to be trained in business skills. With a horse, wagon, and teaching materials he started a business college on wheels. He called it Draughon Practical Business College. He made a circuit through Tennessee and Kentucky. Eventually his colleges were located in virtually all Southern and Western states. December 20, 1920, J.C. Bates of Ft. Worth secured a contract to start a Draughon Business College in Wichita Falls. It opened its doors August 12, 1921 in the Holbrook and Wood building at 807 Tenth Street. It was an instant success.

Wichita Falls was just entering the tremendous surge brought on by the oil strikes in Electra and Burkburnett. Offices in these three cities were opening every day. Opportunities abounded. The Depression eight years later, The War, and then the time after the war increased the need for trained business workers. Many families spent their last money to send their son or daughter through Draughon's.

During the first six months of 1941, the Draughon's placement department received 1649 employment offers.

Draughon's boasted that many of their former students had formed businesses of their own. In 1954 the Wichita Falls Draughon Business College moved into a new modern location at 1015 Lamar. At that time it offered both day and night classes. The expected enrollment was about 400 students. Their four main areas of curriculum were: General accounting, Law-salesmanship-mathematics, Advanced typing, and beginning typing. It had interview areas for employers to interview prospective employees.

Additional training areas were: Dictaphone, Telephone etiquette, Electric typewriting, and Mimeograph. On January 23, 1969, the Draughon Business Schools were purchased by LTV Aerospace of Dallas. This was an attempt by the firm to spread into other ventures.

Graduates of Draughon's are many and varied. Aurora Garza Zuera was the first Hispanic graduate of Wichita Falls High School. She also was a graduate of Draughon Business College. Frank Palmer, prominent Wichita County oilman, proudly had it stated in his obituary that he was a graduate of Draughon. The business college was a very strong force in the development of Wichita County.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What is the connection between Midwestern State University and the Governorship of Oklahoma?

Wichita County Archive News

January 2017

We begin a new year in search of a person who can not possibly replace Lita Watson, our retired Archivist. If you know of someone who “fits the bill”, please contact the Archives. Lita is more than willing to provide training.

With Lita returning to volunteer in the Archives on a limited basis, the need for volunteers in the Archives is even more important. Please consider spending some time in the Archives to help make the wealth of information available to the community.

Now is the time to start thinking about Undertold Marker topics. The Texas Historical Commission accepts nominations for undertold marker funding through the Marker Application Fund from May 1 through June 15 each year .

MUSEUM OF NORTH TEXAS HISTORY NEWS

The Spring Exhibit in the Museum of North Texas will feature Texas Historical Commission Historical Markers. The focus of the exhibit will be those markers noting the influence of the African-American community on the development of Wichita County. There are currently 9 markers in the county with two more in the works.

Draughon Business College Students February 3, 1928

