



# PRESERVATION NEWS

# Wichita County Historical Commission

Robert Palmer, Chairman

Bryce Blair, Archivist

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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[wchitacountyhistoricalcommission.org/](http://wchitacountyhistoricalcommission.org/)

Newsletter Editor: Becky Trammell

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

**Volume CCXVI**

Location: Museum of North Texas History Meeting 12:00 Noon - 1:00pm

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

**June 2020**

## From the desk of Robert Palmer

## No Meeting in June

The pictures of large hailstones crashing through roofs and ceilings last week were shocking. Most people had never seen pictures of hail 4 and 5 inches across. It was, in a very negative manner, an historic storm. Throughout the history of Wichita County, hail has, along with snowstorms, tornados, and high winds, caused historic damage and great problems.

Crops are destroyed, homes damaged, and trees blown down. We wheat farmers fear hailstorms in late spring. Many, potentially, large harvests have been destroyed by a single 30 minute storm. How does this happen?

The storm that struck Burburnett and, later, Bowie had a very unusual development. It began as a fairly common small cell just east of Davidson, Oklahoma. It slowly moved to just north of Mt. Carmel, across the river, and slowed down. This was an important factor in the development of the hail. When it reached a point north of Payton Road in central Wichita County, it sent a very significant "hook tail" across the river. Storm forecasters were predicting tornado formation and the development of large hail. All the conditions were there, very strong interior updrafts and slow movement. Large hail develops when the central updraft shoots developing hailstones up into the interior of the cloud at speeds exceeding 110 mph and reaching heights of 30,000 feet. This was happening as the system crept along the Red River toward Burburnett. The hail begins to fall when the weight of the hailstone is greater than the force of the updraft. As it falls through the moisture, it grows in size.

The construction of a hailstone is much like that of an onion. It is not just a chunk of ice, but rather,

layers of alternating clear and opaque ice. It grows as it moves up into the cloud and continues to grow as it descends down through the cloud. Slow movement of the system gives it additional time to grow. This was exactly what happened.

The speed at which it falls can be greatly affected by several conditions. The size of the stone is the first factor. The density of the moisture it falls through is another factor. Again, all of these factors were there. Small stones fall at about 20 mph. Large stones can fall at speeds that exceed 100 mph. Speed and mass create foot pounds of energy. The five inch stones that fell at Burburnett were lethal missiles, comparable to a fired Civil War cannon ball. That was why they were able to penetrate roofs and ceilings.

The country with the most hailstorms is India. One there, in the ninth century, killed an estimated 400 to 600 people with stones the size of cricket balls. The junction point of Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming is the location of the most hailstorms in the United States. Cheyenne, Wyoming averages 9 to 10 hailstorms each year. Of course, we have our share. The record for hailstones is, the largest weighting 2.25 pounds and 7.9 inches diameter. Some of the Burk stones were very close to that. It truly was an historic storm.

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### Question of the Month

**What three locations have hosted**

**The Oil Bowl Game?**

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# Wichita County Archive News

## June 2020

The **Wichita County Archives** opened back up on May 12, 2020 after being closed for six weeks. Even though the shelter-in-place ordinance has been lifted, we are allowing staff only inside the archives. We will follow the lead of the Museum of North Texas History in allowing outside visitors to enter. Currently the museum is still closed.

We have been staying busy with several requests for information through email, phone calls, and our Facebook page.

-Nadine McKown of the Wichita County Heritage Society was furnished with several old photos of the Times Publishing building at 7<sup>th</sup> & Scott to be used in their Facebook page.

-Jana Schmader of the Downtown WF Development asked for some historical information on the building at 607 Seventh Street. It was discovered that it is the oldest stone building in Wichita Falls, being constructed in about 1884. When built, it was a two story building with a hotel upstairs. There was an arson fire set in the building in 1896, just one month before the notorious City National Bank robbery in which Frank Dorsey was killed. After the fire, the gutted building was re-constructed to a one story building as it is today. The building was recently purchased by a local person and will hopefully be restored.

-Casey Osborne with the Wichita Theatre was furnished with a copy of a photo recently discovered in the archives. The photo was of the inside of the theatre as it was when it was originally built. The scale of grandeur found in our Wichita Theatre could be compared to one found in New York City. Casey was very excited to receive the image as this is their first glimpse at what it used to look like. We are also furnishing him with some copies of original playbills from 1909 & 1910.

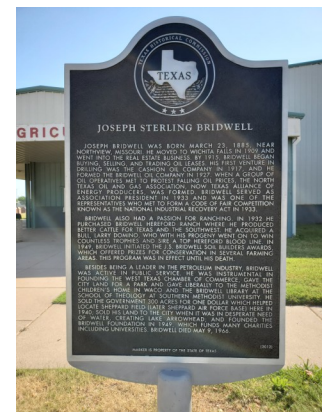
-Chris Cline of California contacted the archives about any information we might have on his great grandfather, Walter D. Cline. With the assistance of Becky Trammell, Chris was furnished volumes of historical information and photos of his very famous great grandfather. Driller of the Fowler Oil well that started the Burk Oil Boom and constructing his home on Hamilton Blvd that resembles the east wing of the White House are just some of the accomplishments that amazed Chris.

-Everyone is urged to check-out the [Wichita County Texas Archives](#) Facebook page, highlighting our country's rich past.

### NO MEETING IN JUNE OR JULY

The Wichita County Historical Commission will NOT have a meeting in June due to continued concerns related to Covid-19. The Commission traditionally does not meet in July. We hope to meet at the Museum of North Texas History on August 6th.

## J. S. Bridwell Project #2



## Museum of North Texas History News

The Museum of North Texas History remains closed. The staff continues work on needed renovations and implementation of CDC guidelines for the protection of Museum visitors. Please watch the Museum's social media for updates.