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# Wichita County Archive News

## May 2015

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Wichita General Hospital marker has been received. Bethania marker is at the foundry.

**JUNETEENTH 150th Anniversary City Wide Celebration  
Three Day Celebration - June 19, 20, 21**

For more information, contact the Juneteenth Committee, 940-767-5972 or email  
wfjuneteenth@gmail.com

**“Pioneers Remember”** is now available at the Museum of North Texas History. All profits from the book sales (books are \$25) benefit the Museum. The book commemorates the Golden Jubilee Celebration held in September 1932. Information gathered from the pioneers was originally compiled by Mary Kearby. The revised edition includes recently uncovered biographies of Wichita County pioneers.

Texas Historical Commission “Undertold Marker” application period begins on May 1st. This is an opportunity to receive a FREE marker for a topic that otherwise might be neglected. For more information, look at the THC website (<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/>) or contact Lita at the Archives.

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### **“Let Me Be Known By The Work Of My Hands” - CONTINUED**

Among the rarest and most beautiful collectibles is a Mowery black powder rifle made by Bill Mowery while he had his shop in Iowa Park. Mowery rifles are located all over the globe. Along with guns, Wichita County residents liked fishing. Darrel Groth of Vernon makes, from scratch, split cane fly rods. This is hand craftsmanship at its highest level. The rod is hand planed and consists of six 60 degree strips of the finest tonkin bamboo fitted together to make 360 degrees. This is from the grip, which is hand turned, to the tip measured in thousands of an inch. It takes over 100 hours to make one rod. Dick Bundy makes graphite fly rods, which in itself is an art form. This brings me to a story.

Dick Waggoner, a member of a longtime historical Wichita County family, had one passion he dearly loved. It was fly fishing in Northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. His estate sale was a picture of what he loved. His fishing vest, his collection of hand tied flies, and several of his split cane rods were on sale. Among them was one marked, “Hand made for Dick Waggoner by Neil McMullen”. The name, Neil McMullen, is familiar to many Wichita County residents. Neil ran Production Machine and Tool in Iowa Park and Wichita Falls. I didn’t know he made split cane fly rods. I had to know the story. Neil is elderly now, but still a very capable person. I got hold of him to learn the story of the rod. The story really brought home the value of hand craftsmanship. Neil and Dick fished together and were good friends. Neil made the rod for Dick, and now the rest of the story, in exchange for jewelry made by Dick’s wife for Mrs. McMullen. We Wichita County people are truly unique people!