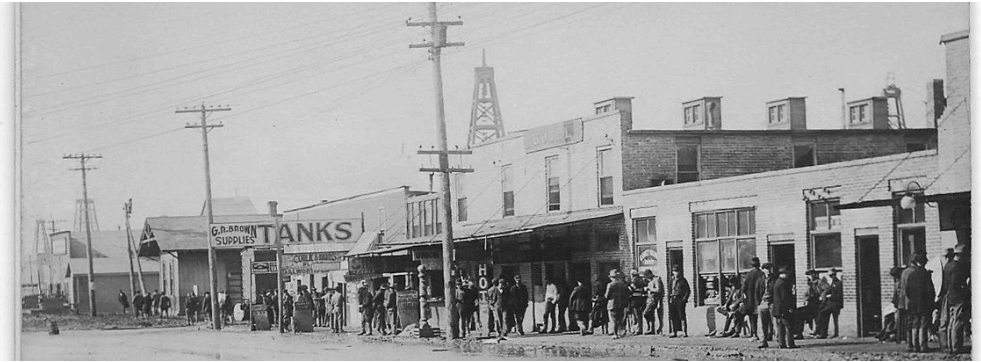


720 INDIANA AVE., WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS 76301



From the desk of Robert Palmer

A very positive movement in our community has been the recognition of the veterans who served in the military. Wichita County has a long history of men, who left their families, to serve in the nation's defense.

The story begins with the roots of the State of Texas. Stephen F. Austin formed the Texas National Guard in 1823 to defend the emerging Texas. Over the years men defended their families and neighbors through the Texas Rangers, the Texas National Guard, and units of the U.S. Military assigned to Texas.

The War with Mexico in 1845 included many men from Texas. The Civil War included men serving on both sides. Many area residents had ancestors who served in the Texas Cavalry, most notably the 6th Texas Cavalry. Founder Joseph H. Barwise served in the Missouri Division during the War. Many ancestors of county residents were active in the Indian Wars. M.A. Green of western Wichita County was at Adobe Walls and the Battle of 10th Cavalry Creek.

Historical artifacts of residents who joined Teddy Roosevelt when he formed his unit at The Menger Hotel in San Antonio still show up in estate sales. The story of how many were part of his charge up San Juan Hill has been lost to time. As a historian, I have had the opportunity to learn the stories of several Wichita County residents who joined Black Jack Pershing in his encounters with Pancho Villa, from both sides just before World War I. Being 80 years of age, I grew up listening to neighbors, Jim Renfoe and Paul Parker, tell about World War I and its horrors, of trench warfare with gas attacks and rats in the water-filled trenches.

Many World War II soldiers did not like to talk about their experiences. I knew three who were on Corregidor when it fell. Around the front yard, in evening conversations before television, they would slowly tell how bad it was. I worked with a principal, Al Durbin, who earned the Flying Cross for shooting down a Japanese Zero at the Battle of Iwo Jima. Another fellow principal, Keith Sales, was a machine gunner in General George Patton's Third Army. My childhood friend, Delbert Holland, is on the Viet Nam Wall.

Wichita County residents served in many ways. Some were drafted; some joined; some took ROTC in college and were commissioned. Some were members of National Guard Units that were called to active duty. The 36th Division of the Texas National Guard was organized in 1914. The famous Lost Battalion came from that group. After the Japanese capture, the nation did not know where they were.

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**Wichita County
Archives**
Carol Rudd, Archivist

Hours of Operation:
**Wednesday, Thursday,
and Friday**
10:00am - 4:00pm

*Wichita County Texas
Archives is on*
Facebook



Program

Darrel Franklin
KFDX



MEETING
**First Thursday of the
Month**
12:00 Noon - 1:00pm
**Museum of North
Texas History**
720 Indiana

Becky Trammell, Newsletter Editor

**Wichita County Historical Commission
Minutes - March 6, 2025**

Call to Order: Robert Palmer called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

Attendance Members: Jeremy Davis, Carol Rudd, Douglas James, Suzanne Darr, Paula Elmore, John Yates, Russell Miller, Billy Clark

Attendance Guest: Rose E. Wallace, Laurie Cruse, Joseph Ross, Teri Kramer, Shon'de Hood, Teresa Gilmore

Program: Each month we usually have a historical speaker, but this time we watched historical movies. Shon-de Hood, a graduate of MSU Texas, who is now working for KFDX, majored in Mass Communications with a minor in Broadcasting. Many historical commission members were unaware of the department, much less how many students were enrolled and the curriculum. As part of the graduation requirements, senior students submit a 12 to 15 minute documentary of their choosing. The first movie was "The Greater Good." A push and pull story of water rights of Ringgold and Wichita Falls which has been going on since the 1950s. The second entry was "A Life Out of Reach. The Rise and Fall of Bobby Johnson." Local farmers are still wounded by the deceit of what they thought was a good friend. Hood did a fine job of explaining the film requirements, the pitfalls and the joy and sometimes trouble of working together as a group. If you missed the meeting or want to watch the films again, each documentary can be seen on YouTube MNGMedia.

Approval of Minutes: The February minutes were approved. Douglas James made the motion to accept and Bryce Blair seconded.

Chairman Reports:

Program: Douglas James

Cemetery: John Yates

Website: Becky Trammell and Elizabeth Hawley:

Markers: Becky Trammell

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Adjournment: At 1:00p.m. Bryce Blair made the motion to adjourn and Carol Rudd seconded.

2025 Spring Marker Cycle

Now is the time for marker applications. The marker price has increased from \$2500 (\$100 application fee) to \$2600 (\$100 application fee). All applications must be submitted online. The deadline is May 15th.

Agenda - April 3rd

Call to Order: Robert Palmer

Attendance Members:

Attendance Guest:

Program: Darrell Franklin, KFDX

Approval of Minutes: March

Chairman Reports:

Program: Douglas James

Cemetery: John Yates:

Website: Becky Trammell and Elizabeth Hawley:

Markers: Spring Marker Cycle began March 1.

Old Business:

New Business:

Adjournment:

ARCHIVE HAPPENINGS

March 2024

Tom Libby of Electra is making a video about Annie Cooper and asked if we had some great photos to enhance the video. He was looking for a picture of an old 1900s derrick, a gusher and an Electra Newspaper from the 1900s. He was pleased. We are so lucky to have early pictures and news articles.

Soon there will be a Historical Home Tour. Mary Draper came to the Archives to get the scoop on who, what, when, why and how. The homes are: 1500 Hayes, 106 Pembroke, 2000 Avondale and 1634 Victory. Sounds like a grand time.

Ellis Mumford-Russell of Post Oak Preservation Solutions is buzzing around downtown. I haven't met her yet, but the requests are riveting. First: A request of old and new pictures of the Staley Building, which is now the Wichita Tower. Second: Before and after pictures of the Times Square building. Hmm! Wonder what's going on? I've heard Staley may be downtown apartments.

If you're a big fan of old LIFE magazines, stop by and look at the collection. Lonnie Cullet brought in 4 plastic tubs from the late 40s to the mid 60s. And if you're an old car buff, you'll grin from ear to ear.

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Call Field was active from 1917-1919. 3000 men were stationed there. 500 received their wings. 34 died during training. They trained on the J-4 Jenny. The 131st Field Artillery National Guard was assigned to Wichita Falls. Electra's National Guard Armory became the 49th Armored Division in 1947. They trained at Ft. Polk, Louisiana, a hellhole of swamps, snakes, and mosquitoes. They were called up several times.

One of the most interesting military organizations in Wichita County was the ROTC at Midwestern University. Beginning in the 1950s, it reached 309 members in 1964 and fell to 205 in 1968. Many county and area leaders trained as part of the unit including Dr. Bill Dean, Woody Gossom, Noros Martin, Roy Boutwell, Jim Crump, Mike Laughon, Jerry McNair, and yes, Robert Palmer, and many others. All of the group would cite MSgt. Cebon Van Horn as the best instructor they ever had. Two lost their lives in Viet Nam: former battalion leader 2Lt. Ron Miller [Battle of Pleiku] and Capt. Mike Marker. Marker was flying a mission in the Demilitarized Zone when his aircraft disappeared. His craft and crew were never found.

The most famous war casualty in Wichita County history was 1Lt. Alfred H. [Pat] Carrigan. He was killed on Oct. 8, 1918 at Sy. Elienne, France. He was J.H. Barwise's grandson.

The Wichita County casualties by war are: World War I - 2, World War II - 216, Korea - 19, Viet Nam - 39. All of these men and the others who served deserve the respect of all people!

Upcoming Programs

May-Road Trip to Burkburnett; June-Joel Jimenz;
 July-No Meeting; August-Open



Becky Trammell, Marker Chair, presented a Centennial plaque to Hilda Myles and Reverend Carl Harris of Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church at their celebration banquet. The Church has been approved for a Texas Historical Commission Marker.