



## PRESERVATION NEWS

## Wichita County Historical Commission

Robert Palmer, Chairman

Bryce Blair, Archivist

Wichita County Archives

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Telephone 940-763-0020

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 CCXLXI

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

November 5, 2020

### From the desk of Robert Palmer

### ZOOM MEETING

“Teaching is not the filling of a pot but the lighting of a fire.”  
- W.B. Yeats

Wichita County has been blessed with history teachers who lit “the fire” in their students. This action has carried on the knowledge of what came before and what is to come. It began early in the county’s schools. George P. Hardgrove was both teacher and principal for Rocky Point Rural School near Beaver Creek. He loved history and had the unique gift of describing events in a manner that created imagery in his students’ minds. He spent the last part of his teaching career at Electra Junior High. There, he continued to teach his love of history. His favorite topics were the oil industry and ranching, subjects very much a part of his student’s lives.

When you say, “History teachers”, most former county students think of Merle Anthony. Mrs. Anthony’s assignment was at Wichita Falls High School, but she touched students all over Wichita County. She became a frequent speaker for Graduations and Career Days. She used very lively language to describe her stories. She could be very aggressive and, in the same speech, very tender. When she described the horrors of the Civil War, tears would form in her eyes. The connection with her listeners was accomplished.

Many history teachers taught from their own experiences. Patsy Propps Handley grew up on the massive Waggoner Ranch. Her father was legendary White Face Ranch foreman, Son Propps. She witnessed ranch events including special events such as the Polo Matches, the Arlington Race Track, and visits by celebrities. Her favorite to tell her students about was the visit by movie stars Robert Taylor and Barbara Stanwyck. She admitted that she gathered up Robert Taylor’s cigarette butts, took them to her high school, and sold them as souvenirs to her fellow students. When Taylor realized what she was doing, he joked about forming a business partnership. Her students loved the stories.

Jim Gotcher of Iowa Park High School was in a class by

himself. When he taught Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Churchill, and Franklin D. Roosevelt, he dressed the part. His F.D.R. voice was right on. When he taught the Civil War, he brought Civil War guns from his personal collection, a practice that would probably get you arrested in this day and time. When the teacher described battles, it was very enriching to be holding a gun!

Kenny Mayo, at City View, loved history and his students benefitted from it. Like Mr. Gotcher, Mr. Mayo brought history to life with actual activities designed to help the students “feel” history. His touch is still evident when you drive by the school and see the log cabin and windmill he built. His ability to play his guitar and sing historical songs grabbed his students.

Some “teachers” didn’t teach history but influenced those who did. Faris and Penney Nowell controlled a Native American Archeology dig near Apache Creek, New Mexico. The items they recovered and logged were unbelievable treasures. They invited history teachers, such as Stan Willman of Electra, to be part of their dig. The work was hot and hard but the knowledge gained was invaluable. Willman brought back display items and shared them with his students. The Nowell collection is in storage and would be a treasure for our museum.

There are currently many outstanding history teachers in our schools. Braden Perry at Iowa Park is outstanding. He was one of the pilots at our celebration of the first airplane flight at Lake Wichita. He has an exceptional talent to make history come alive.

The teaching of history is a critical subject in our schools. Students will form their decisions as citizens based on the knowledge gained from these teachers!

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**Happy  
Thanksgiving!**

# Wichita County Archive News

## November 2020

### Wichita County Archives Monthly Report – October 2020

In an effort to flood the Texas Historical Commission with Undertold Historical Marker applications, Becky Trammell has snared several members of our local commission into writing narratives about local celebrities. I was assigned Lloyd Ruby to write about. My initial feeling was to just get it done and over with. Now, after getting local racing enthusiast, Joseph Raines involved, it has turned into a project with passion. Local interest in Lloyd Ruby and other racers from here is over the top. We have progressed from just writing a narrative to making a special place to commemorate all racers from Wichita Falls. The idea of placing the Lloyd Ruby marker in Harold Jones Park, which is in-between the Lloyd Ruby Overpasses, was suggested. Then the idea of re-naming the park, Lloyd Ruby Park or Racer's Park made it sound even better. Look for exciting things to happen in Harold Jones Park in the near future.

-It should be noted that we have only three of the FREE Undertold Historical Markers in Wichita County. Becky is determined on getting more this upcoming year. She is such a great asset to our historical commission. Thanks Becky !!!

-James Weatherby of Finishing Touch brought some old photo negatives to the archives. He purchased them at a garage sale for \$10. The collection was comprised of 55 negatives containing 67 different images. He said if we would scan the negatives and give him digital copies, we could keep the negatives. Turns out, most of the photos are from the Times Record News Anniversary Edition, many of which we have never seen. Great new addition to our archives.

-Mary Fritzgerld from Joshua, Texas contacted the archives asking about the Lone Star Refinery in Wichita Falls. She has three photos of the refinery from 1919 and said they were from her great grandparents belongings. Her family knows very little of her grandparents or great grandparents lives. Research at the archives opened several unknown chapters of her family's history. That is the fun part of working at the archives.

### NOVEMBER 2020 HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING

We had hoped to meet in person in November. However, with the current spiking of cases, we will continue to ZOOM meet in November and December. We'll continue to monitor the news and county recommendations for future face to face meetings.

Topic: My Meeting

Time: Nov 5, 2020 11:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75623814503?pwd=MnVPS2xVaDgxOWluQU1HeHZLejdkZz09>

Meeting ID: 756 2381 4503

Passcode: Q0DF0J

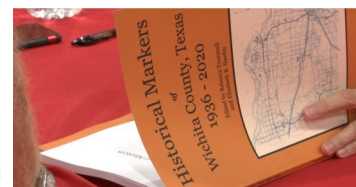
## Museum of North Texas History News

The Museum continues it's opening schedule of Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. We are starting with a reduced schedule to stay on top of our new and improved cleaning procedures. Our goal is to keep our visitors and our staff safe.

On Saturday, October 17th, the Museum of North Texas History hosted a book signing for "Historical Markers of Wichita County, Texas 1936-2020."



Sales of the book benefit the Museum of North Texas History and the Wichita County Archives. The book is on sale at the Museum and available through Amazon.



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