



THE CYCLONE



WTHA in Odessa for 2014



President J. Tillapaugh of Odessa has announced that the WTHA Annual Meeting will be held April 4-5, 2014 in Odessa, Texas. The conference will be held at the MCM Grande Hotel and Conference Center. For reservations call 432-362-2311 or 866-362-2311 and mention that you are with the WTHA. The room rate is \$109.00 per night which includes a full breakfast. The hotel is located at 6201 East Business 20. The hotel facilities are very spacious, and there is an in-hotel convention center which we will use for our meeting. Several large meeting rooms and an open lobby area will give us plenty of room for presentations, vendors, and just getting together. There is a hotel restaurant for your dining pleasure. As is our tradition, the Friday Night Banquet will be held

at a special off-site location. Current plans are to hold the reception and evening dinner at the Commemorative Air Force Museum. Plan now to attend. A Thursday day tour (April 3, 2014) to Horsehead Crossing and Castle Gap with a stop at the Crane County Museum are planned (see page two). The tour will require an early start on Thursday morning. On Thursday evening an Early Bird reception and meal will be held on the patio at the hotel/conference center. For more information contact Robert Hall, Annual Conference Coordinator at Robert.J.Hall@ttu.edu. While program proposals were due on November 1, 2013 the program committee will continue to give consideration to those arriving after that date. Forward any ideas to programcommittee@wtha.org or directly to Troy Ainsworth at trov.ainsworth@wtha.org.

Wichita Falls 'Tracking Trails' Meeting

T. Kreidler

The Wichita Falls meeting is now history however the lingering after-glow of its success continues on with the good work of "trail trackers" – aka historians – putting boots on the ground on new territory and crossing over to new horizons. John Miller Morris reminded us at the Friday night key note speech at the Kemp Center in Wichita Falls about the importance of trails and that all historians are essentially on a large quest of discovery. Wallace Coffey's special appearance as the Chairman of the Comanche Nation reminded us of the expatriot Texans that live north of the Red River and of the trail blazing work done by Montie Guthrie and the City of Santa Anna to illuminate the shared history with the Comanche.

The Great Western Trail Association of Texas sponsored a special session that outlined the grassroots project of citizen historians in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas Nebraska, and other locales within the

upper Great Plains corridor and it reminds us that large scale history projects are within the grasp of all historians no matter where they worked.

The WTHA also welcomed back its regularly sponsored sessions featuring the East Texas Historical Association (ETHA) and the Center for Big Bend Studies (CBBS). Scott Sosebee of the ETHA and Andy Cloud of the CBBS attended the meeting along with their individual session presenters.

Outgoing WTHA President Marisue Potts in her luncheon address deftly underscored the strong agricultural base of West Texans and used her own personal history and family lore to remind us that each of us are custodians of a shared and powerful history.

During the conference Lucile Glasgow and Travis Childs along with other colleagues from the Clay County Historical Commission and the staff from the *Clay County 1890 Jail Museum* graciously led WTHA members on an interesting tour of the museum, historical sites along the county back roads, and a stop at the historic

markers that outline the significance of rancher W. S. Ikard and the Petrolia Oil Field. As a special treat the tour concluded with a lunch at the famed and presumably historic, *Bill's Catfish* restaurant just across the river from Byers, Texas in Oklahoma.

Many thanks are extended to the Wichita Falls tourism and convention office, for the enjoyable visit to the Historic Kell House, a tour of the Museum of North Texas, and a surprise stop at the Call Field Aviation Museum to see one of the few operational World War I "Jennys."

Saturday afternoon and evening members had the opportunity to spend time at historic Medicine Park, Oklahoma, visited the top of Mount Scott, drove through the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, and returned to Wichita Falls for a downtown "Dark Side" tour that delved into crime and ghost stories.

The association owes many thanks to all of the committees and members who contributed their time and effort in making the Wichita Falls meeting a success. We look forward to the Odessa meeting on April 4-5, 2014. We hope to see everyone there.

TOUR OF CASTLE GAP AND HORSE HEAD CROSSING

Come join us for the tour on Thursday
April 4, 2014:

Horsehead Crossing is a ford on the Pecos River, Crane County, Texas. Historically it was major landmark on the trail west as one of a few fordable sections of the Pecos in West Texas, and as a first source of water for about 75 miles on the wagon and stage route from the east. Elmer Kelton used Horsehead Crossing as subject and title of one of his *Tales of Texas* books (July 1, 1988). Several other books on the West and West Texas including *Crossing Rio Pecos* (Chisholm Trail Series) by Patrick Dearing (1996) have used Horsehead Crossing as part of their material. Legend says that when Maximillian was toppled in 1867, his wealth was packed up for overland shipment to Galveston, where it



would be sent to Austria. The treasure train was ambushed at the historic Horsehead Crossing on the Pecos River in West Texas by six former Confederate soldiers. They killed the wagoners, buried the loot and headed back east. Five

were soon killed in an Indian attack, and the sixth, stopped briefly at Fort Concho to treat an illness, where he told the story. Do you think that is true?

Castle Gap in Crane County, Texas.

The necessity of surveying the region brought several parties to Castle Gap in 1849 and 1850, including those of John S. (Rip) Ford and Maj. Robert S. Neighbors in April 1849, 1st Lt. Francis T. Bryan in July 1849, and John Russell Bartlett in October 1850. From 1858 to 1861 Butterfield Overland Mail stages passed through the gap twice a week on their 2,795-mile, twenty-five-day trips between Tipton, Missouri, and San Francisco California. The first stage traversed the pass on the night of September 25, 1858, en route to fresh mules at Horsehead Crossing. The most noteworthy cattle drive through the Gap occurred in the spring of 1866, when Charles Goodnight, Oliver Loving, and eighteen men trailed 2,000 longhorn steers and breeding cows to Fort Sumner, New Mexico, from the Brazos in North Texas by way of the Middle Concho and Castle Gap.

Museum of the Desert Southwest. Crane, Texas. Crane is located 32 miles south of Odessa, Texas. Crane County and the City of Crane were named for William Carey Crane, founder of Baylor University. We will stop in Crane for lunch and a visit to the Crane County Museum. Our stop in Crane will be hosted by the Crane County Historical and Museum Group. For more

information contact the Annual Conference Coordinator at Robert.J.Hall@ttu.edu.

Robert Hall

Fall Is Membership Renewal Time.

Download a renewal form at www.wtha.org or simply renew online electronically. The 2013 *West Texas Historical Review* will be ready for mailing by the end of the year. For more information regarding membership status email wthayb@ttu.edu or call 806-742-9076. See below for current membership rates.

Women's History Breakfast Planned

Cecelia Venable of Corpus Christi and Marisue Potts of Motley County are planning a Women's History Breakfast for the Odessa meeting. A specific date has yet to be chosen however it will be either Friday (April 4) or Saturday morning (April 5). If you have a preference or would like to attend or would like to assist in the planning please contact them at wthayb@ttu.edu or marisue.potts@wtha.org.

THE CYCLONE

A Newsletter for members of the West Texas Historical Association

Editors: Jim & Becky Matthews

Published twice a year by the West Texas Historical Association, Lubbock, Texas. Browse back issues of the Cyclone at www.wtha.org

WEB PAGE

A Website for members of the West Texas Historical Association

Editor: Lynn Whitfield

The site lists association news, conference updates, and membership forms for new members. Members are encouraged to submit professional and organization news and photographs. Please send those to Lynn.Whitfield@ttu.edu or wthayb@ttu.edu.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The WTHA Facebook is maintained for the benefit of members and affiliates who are interested in West Texas history.

Editor: Wes Sheffield wes.sheffield@wtha.org

MEMBERSHIP

Members receive *The West Texas Historical Review*, published each fall, containing articles, news notes, and book reviews about West Texas history. Annual membership fees are \$10 for students, \$30 regular, \$35 family, \$50 sustaining, \$25 institutional/library. All back issues of the *Year Book*, published since 1925, are available for \$15 each.

New members can join electronically at www.wtha.org or they can obtain information at wthayb@ttu.edu.