

**Permian Historical
Society**

**The University of
Texas
Permian Basin
Campus**

Spring 2001

**Permian Historical Society
Officers and Directors
2000-2002**

Officers

Bobbie Jean Klepper, *President*
Eula Huffman, *Program*
Peggy Kelton, *Membership*
Modene Yocham, *Secretary*
Eileen Welch, *Treasurer*
Cindy Rosser, *Archivist*

Directors

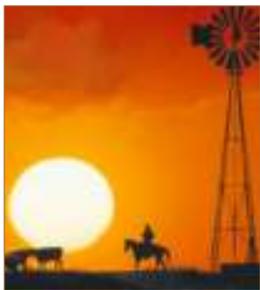
Donna Bell, *Rankin*
Mary Prudie Brown, *Stanton*
Geniece Childress, *Ozona*
Cecil Drake, *Big Spring*
Marshall D. Huffman, *Odessa*
James V. Humphrey, *Midland*
Wm. B. Johnston, *Midland*
Nancy McKinley, *Midland*
Ross F. McSwain, *San Angelo*
Betty Orbeck, *Midland*
Irene Paulette, *Odessa*
June Reid, *Stanton*
Noble H. Smith, *Van Horn*
Pat Zellmer, *Midland*

The Annual Editorial Board

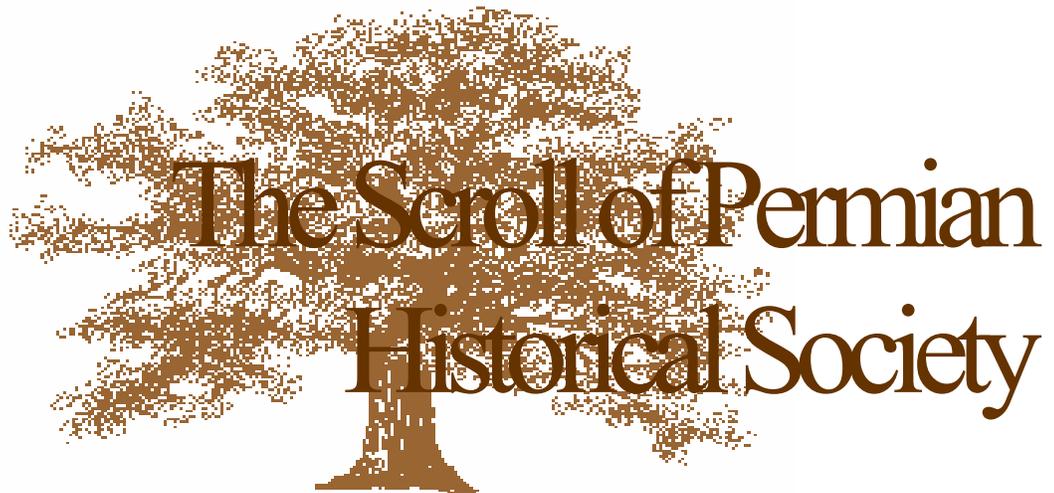
H. Warren Gardner, *Managing Editor*
Ross F. McSwain
J. Tillapaugh
Julia Cauble Smith

The Scroll Staff

Lorene Barbee, *Graphics Consultant*
Eileen Welch, *Mailing*
J. C. Smith, *Editor*



Dr. H. Warren Gardner, Managing Editor of *The Annual* 40 announces that this issue is an exceptional one. It has a color cover and a number of photos and illustrations for the articles. Copies will be distributed to members present at the spring meeting and mailed to absent members.



**Awards to be Presented to Two Longtime
Members; Howard County Attendees to Have
Special Recognition at Spring Meeting**

Date: 28 April 2001

Place: Petroleum Museum, Library, and Hall of
Fame, 1500 I-20 West, Midland

Coffee and pastries are scheduled at 9:30 A.M. for members and visitors. The board of directors meet at the same time. Members and guests from Howard County are to be recognized as honored attendees by **Peggy Kelton**, Membership Chairman, at 10:10 A.M. Everyone from Howard County, as well as every other county, who is interested in the history of the Permian Basin is encouraged to come.

The program of papers, moderated by **Eula Huffman**, appears to be interesting and educational. The first is a borderlands paper about a feud between a U. S. Army captain and J. J. Kilpatrick of Candelaria, Texas, during a time of revolution. The other three papers deal with Permian Basin topics—a modern history about Odessa city government, a ranching history of the extensive Parker Ranch, and a modern accounting of the Colorado River Water District. Following the program of papers, the voting for the best presentation, and a visiting and book-browsing time, lunch is catered by Murray and the Frenchman. Cost is \$8 per person. The menu consists of an entree of chicken scampi on a bed of rice pilaf, Caesar salad, garlic herbed and buttered bread, iced tea, and dessert. Reservations are requested by Wednesday, 25 April 2001 to **Eileen Welch** at 915/682-0839, Ewelch115@aol.com. If you forget to call or email, come ahead as welcomed company! There is usually enough food for extra people.

With lunch over, an awards program begins. The Evelyn Scarborough Linebery-J. Conrad Dunagan Best Article Award will be presented to the historian whose paper was judged the best in *The Annual* 40. Next, PHS plans to present two of its prestigious awards to longtime members, **Betty Orbeck** and **Bobbie Jean Klepper**. See the full story on page 4. A short business meeting will end the gathering by 1:20 P.M.

Life in West Texas

The replacement of the open range by the ranches brought something else in its wake—a general improving of the herds. As long as the grass was free, the cattleman had a relatively small overhead expense, longhorns could be raised at a profit. When he had to invest huge sums of money in land, and still more money in fencing and watering it, old-fashioned longhorns did not pay. With a limited amount of grass, and it at a premium, it was necessary to raise fewer and better cattle. A few cattlemen in West Texas foresaw the future and began to bring in small nuclei of blooded cattle as early as 1876.

—William Curry Holden, *Alkali Trails*
(Dallas: The Southwest Press, 1930),
50.

Summer Field Trip

Dr. J. Tillapaugh, a longtime researcher of old Fort D. A. Russell at Marfa, has issued an invitation to all PHS members and guests to tour the fort with him as their guide on 16 June 2001. The tour begins at 1 P.M. and continues about three hours at a leisurely pace. A reception will follow at Dr. Tillapaugh's restored weekend home at the fort. This allows an opportunity to see the old army fort and learn its history. Details are available at the spring meeting. If you make this a weekend trip, the Gage Hotel, Marfa Lights, McDonald Observatory, and several state parks and national sites await you.

News of Permian Historical Society

Necrology

Edward E. Cox of Monahans, a longtime PHS member and a retired rancher, died 15 October 2000 at Monahans. He was born in Grady, New Mexico, and served in the Air Force during World War II. Edd Cox maintained a life-long interest in the history of the Permian Basin.

Cyril J. Perusek of Midland, a PHS member and a retired geologist, died 4 January 2001 in Midland. He was born 27 July 1916 in Lorain, Ohio, and graduated from New Mexico School of Mines and Texas Tech University with degrees in geology and engineering. He served in the U. S. Army during World War II. He worked as a geologist in Midland from 1952 until his retirement. He taught geology part-time at UTPB and Midland College. He was a Boy Scout leader for several decades.

Dickie Dell Ferro of Iraan, a PHS member with an interest in area and regional history, died recently.

Permian Historical Society notes the passing of these members. We are grateful that our organization was a part of their interesting and influential lives

Our Museum and Archives People



Image by Lorene Barbee

What would we do without them? Someone has to catalogue, file, preserve, re-shelve, smile pleasantly when we ask dumb questions, and generally make us feel at home in the museums and archives. Above from left: **Bobbie Jean Klepper**, retiring UTPB archivist; **Carey Behrends**, Presidential Museum director, **Cindy Rosser**, incoming UTPB archivist; **Todd Houck**, incoming archivist at Petroleum Museum; **Betty Orbeck**, retiring archivist at Petroleum Museum.

Ava E. Mills Donates Book to PHS for Fundraiser

Ava E. Mills of San Angelo, a PHS member as well as a journalist, historian, and author, has donated six copies of each of her two recent books for a fund-raising sale. All twelve copies are signed by the author and will be available for purchase at the spring meeting.

One book, titled *A Legacy of Words: Texas Women's Stories, 1850-1920*, is based on the experiences of forty-one early-day Texas woman who were interviewed by WPA writers during the late 1930s and early 1940s. Those women lived in Amarillo, Austin, Lubbock, San Angelo, San Antonio, Waco, Wichita Falls, and some places that no longer exist.

The second book, called *West Texans Remember the Home Front*, is devoted to the lives of people who spent World War II in Abilene, Goree, Hamlin, Monahans, San Angelo, Sweetwater, and several other places. The author conducted these interview and captured the subjects' experiences for the reader, giving a feel for a time that passed long before many of us were born.

Permian Historical Society congratulates Ava E. Mills for her fine work in Texas oral history. We are grateful that she chose to give these twelve copies to our organization as a fund-raising project.

Tables will be available for the display of other publications by local and regional writers. All Texas history and related-topic booksellers are invited to bring their publications for display and sale. The display of local and regional books allows PHS members the opportunity to support writers from our area.

The Annual on Sale

Back issues of *The Annual* are offered for \$7 per single issue and \$150 for a complete set. Costs of handling and shipping are included in the price. Orders should be sent to: **Cindy Rosser**, Archivist, Permian Historical Society, The Univ. of Texas-Permian Basin, 4901 East Univ. Blvd., Odessa, TX 79762-0001.

Fall 2000 Meeting

The fall meeting was exceptional. The papers were well received and covered interesting topics. Our thanks go to the fine historians in the Permian Basin.

Attendance was good; forty-seven members and guests came. The food was good, as is typical with our exceptional caterer. We had booksellers who showed interesting books for our consideration.

New Members

Beverly Bowhay of Odessa

Wayne Bradshaw of Midland

Glen Ely of Fort Worth

Roger and Jean Goertz of Big Spring

Todd Houck of Midland

Stephanie P. Kern of Odessa

Cindy Rosser of Odessa

Welcome new members!

Please send your email address to the editor at cauble@apex2000.net

Call For Papers

Permian Historical Society Program Committee welcomes proposals for papers to be presented at the Fall 2001 and Spring 2002 meetings. Contact Program Chairman **Eula Huffman** by telephone or by email (915/367-8753 or belledolph@clearsource.net) or President **Bobbie Jean Klepper** (915/362-3654 or klepperb@aol.com) for details. There are numerous topics that a writer might choose, such as influential personalities, outlaws, bootleggers, landmarks, schools—community and ranch—windmills, river crossings, stage stops, cemeteries, oil fields, and hoaxes. Any person, physical feature, or event that affected the lives of people in the Permian Basin is an ideal topic for a paper.

Scholarly papers submitted for publication should be documented, well researched, and clearly written. However, *The Annual* publishes reminiscences because they are important to the preservation of our regional history. Everyone enjoys a story from the person who lived it. PHS wants to hear your story.

Need a Ride to the Spring Meeting?

If you need a ride, contact the editor at 915/697-4955 or cauble@apex2000.net. She will find one for you.

Program For Spring 2001 Meeting

Petroleum Museum, Library, and Hall of Fame

1500 Interstate Highway 20 West, Midland, Texas

28 April 2001

- 09:30 A.M. Registration, coffee, and pastries
- Board meeting in Hall of Fame Room
- 10:10 A.M. Recognition of members/guests from Howard County **Peggy Kelton**, Membership Chairman
Howard County is the first in a series of counties that Permian Historical Society plans to recognize at future spring and fall meetings. We welcome members and guests from Howard County and are honored that they are in attendance.
- Program of Papers **Eula Huffman**, Program Chairman
- 10:20 A.M. **A Big Bend Feud: The Captain and the King of Candelaria** **Glenn Justice**
The writer, who holds a B. A. and M. A. History from UTPB, has spent most of his career writing about the Big Bend area and its characters. This paper deals with a feud between Captain Leonard F. Matlack, commander of the Eighth Cavalry post at Candelaria, Texas, and J. J. Kilpatrick, who owned Candelaria, Texas, in 1917. Although this paper is set outside the Permian Basin, it offers a little-known history about a well-loved area.
- 10:40 A.M. **When Change Came: The Election of the First Minority in Odessa, Texas, in 1968** **Leo Martinez**
The writer is a graduate student in history at UTPB. His interest in this topic comes from the role his father played in the desegregation of Odessa City Council. This paper deals with an important modern struggle—the attempt to open local government to all citizens.
- 11:00 A.M. **James Early Parker, Junior: His Ranches and Cattle Breeding** **Richard Cummins**
The writer received a B. A. and M. A. History at UTPB. He currently serves as director of the Parker House Ranching Museum. His paper traces the history of one of the large ranches in the Permian Basin, covering about 200 sections of land. This is a paper for those who enjoy a good story about ranching in the Permian Basin.
- 11:20 A.M. **Water In A Dry and Thirsty Land** **Ross McSwain**
The writer, a journalist as well as a historian, serves on PHS board of directors and The Annual editorial board. His presentation is about the writing of a book he recently finished with Joe Pickle, a longtime and influential PHS member. The book was completed from notes, old manuscripts drafts, and meeting minutes that Pickle made and preserved over his more than forty-year career as secretary of Colorado River Municipal Water District. The book, funded by CRMWD, represents Pickle's attempt to keep the history of the 50-year-old organization current.
- 11:40 A.M. Casting ballots for best paper presented. Break for visiting and book browsing until lunch is served.
- 12:00 NOON Lunch catered by Murray and the Frenchman
- 12:30 P.M. Awards Program:
Evelyn Scarborough Linebery-J. Conrad Dunagan Best Article **H. Warren Gardner**, presenter
This award is given for the best article that was both presented at a meeting and published in The Annual 40.
Permian Academy of History to **Betty Orbeck** **Todd Houck**, presenter
Permian Academy of History to **Bobbie Jean Klepper** **Lorene Barbee**, presenter
- 01:00 P.M. Short business meeting **Bobbie Jean Klepper**, presiding
- 01:20 P.M. Adjournment

Permian Historical Society to Present Awards to Betty Orbeck and Bobbie Jean Klepper

Permian Historical Society proudly announces the naming of two recipients for its highest award of merit, Permian Academy of History. The recipients are **Betty Orbeck** of Midland and **Bobbie Jean Klepper** of Odessa. The award requires the nominee to have given outstanding contributions to the field of historical preservation. Each recipient has enjoyed a career as an archivist in the Permian Basin and each is a longtime and active member of Permian Historical Society.

Betty Orbeck came to the Permian Basin in January 1952, when she moved from Austin to Odessa. Over the next seventeen years, she worked for Continental Supply Company and Ector County School District. Although she has always been interested in history

and was a co-founder of Permian Historical Society, it was 1969 before she began to work professionally in historical research and preservation. When the late Dr. Samuel D. Myres of El Paso was hired to write a petroleum history of the Permian Basin, Betty became a research assistant for him. When the Myres volumes were completed and The Petroleum Museum opened in 1975, Betty became the museum's archivist. Over the next twenty-five years, Betty added 250,000 photographic prints and negatives, manuscript files, maps, films, and videos to the museum's collections. Under her leadership, the museum's archives increased its number of print volumes to 1,500. Betty retired from her work at the museum on 1 February 2001.

Bobbie Jean Klepper received a B. A. and M. A. History from UTPB and a Masters in Library and Information Science from the University of North Texas. She worked as Special Collections Librarian at UTPB from 1981 to 1985. She was Acting Director of Library Services in 1985 and 1986, after which time she returned to the position of Special Collections Librarian.

During Bobbie Jean's tenure, Special Collections grew from a few boxes of materials to a collection that was housed in a 2,100-square-foot facility. She has worked for the historical restorations of the White-Pool House and Henderson Drug Building in Ector County. She retired from UTPB Special Collections early in 2001.

If undeliverable, please return to:

J. C. Smith, Editor
2905 Sentinel Drive
Midland, TX 79701

PHS dues per year: students \$5; individuals \$10; families \$20; libraries, museums, groups \$35. Send checks to Eileen Welch, 3610 South County Road 1187, Midland, TX 79706

