

**Permian
Historical Society**

**The University of Texas of
the Permian Basin Campus**

Spring 2003



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Permian Historical News

Permian Historical Society To Meet At Petroleum Museum in Midland on 26 April 2003

Next Meeting: 26 April 2003

Place: Petroleum Museum, 1500 Interstate
West, Midland, Texas

Uniform of the Day: Western—Historic or Current

Permian Historical Society will gather at the Petroleum Museum in Midland for its spring meeting on 26 April 2003. An excellent program of papers is planned by Program Vice President **Todd Houck**. After lunch, a number of awards will be given to some of the finest people in the Permian Basin.

Dr. **J. Tillapaugh** will moderate the first part of the awards program when Honorary Life Membership Awards will be presented to eight members who have worked in various ways to preserve regional history—by writing history, by maintaining county museums, and by supporting Permian Historical Society over the long years. They are **Geniece Childress** of Crockett County, **Ann M. Clark**, formerly of Upton County, **Nancy McKinley** of Midland County, **Paul Patterson** of Crane County, **June Reid** of Martin County, **Mamie Shepperd** formerly of Ector County, **Noble H. Smith** of Culberson County, and **Charles Stroder** of Crane County. Three other members will be recognized for their devoted service to Permian Historical Society, although they are already life members. They are **Mary Prudie Brown** of Martin County, and **Bobbie Jean Klepper** of Ector County, and **Betty Orbeck** of Midland and Ector counties. All living charter members will be introduced, namely Dr. **James M. Day**, **Enid Holm**, **Betty Orbeck**, **Mamie Shepperd**, **Charles Stroder**, and **Vernon A. Vashbinder**.

Two long-time Permian Basin residents will receive Permian Pioneer Awards for their volunteer work in the religious, educational, cultural, recreational, and/or economic development of the region. Congratulations go to **Bob Deavenport** of Martin County and **Eileen Welch** of Midland County, who are the recipients.

Remember to wear Western attire and join us 26 April 2003.

Cost of the meal is \$7.00 and reservations **must** be made to **Peggy Kelton** at 915/652-8738 or pkelton@nwol.net. Please make reservations by Wednesday, 23 April 2003.

Life in West Texas

When it comes to weather and water in West Texas, the only dependable thing is recurring cycles. Optimism is followed by dry crises. So, after 50 years of meeting challenges, the Colorado River Municipal Water District is confronted with conditions not unlike its beginning.

At the District's outset, the historic drought of the early 1950s was followed with confidence the water problem was solved for several years. Then there came another dry period in the early 1970s, one in the 1980s, and then one at the end of the twentieth century. It is a fact of life in West Texas, where evaporation can be 3.5 times as much as annual precipitation; one can never be at ease in Zion.

In 1999, rainfall in the service area was half the historical average, and this was a continuation of conditions existing in the last half of the last decade of the century.

Actually, during the last six years of the century, Lake J. B. Thomas received only 25 percent of average inflow, leaving it 96 percent empty; the E. V. Spence Reservoir had received only 38.8 percent inflow and was 85 percent empty. While Lake O. H. Ivie was 76.1 percent full, its inflow had been only 73.9 percent of average, and its comforting 422,000 acre-feet of storage was limited only by pipeline capacity to serve the system.

—**Joe Pickle with Ross McSwain**, *Water in a Dry and Thirsty Land: The First 50 Years of The Colorado River Municipal Water District* (n.p.: The Colorado River Municipal Water District, 2000), 311.

News of Permian Historical Society

Dear Members and Friends,

Permian Historical Society will be closing another year with this spring meeting. It has been a year of ironing out unexpected problems, of searching for ways to make our meetings more interesting, and of attempting to preserve the history of this region.

We have handled our problems well through the work of the Executive Committee, which has met several times during the year. Our meetings have been made more interesting by changing the agenda to allow a time for visiting before the program of papers and by moving the board meeting to the end of the agenda. The papers now being accepted by the program committee have general appeal to a wide audience and are limited to twenty minutes in length. You will appreciate our new program format.

However, one problem that we have not been able to solve is that of persuading members to pay dues. PHS needs money from dues to operate, just as other organizations do. It is true that PHS has an endowment for scholarships, but that money is not used to run the organization. We no longer have benefactors who make large contributions when they are needed. The money used for general expenses comes from dues, fund-raisers, and small contributions. Please help us keep Permian Historical Society moving into its forty-fifth year by paying your dues.

Sincerely,

Ross McSwain

President

yonder1@cox-internet.com



Left: **Paul Patterson** of Crane County listens attentively to the speaker at the fall meeting in McCamey. Forty-three years ago, on 28 February 1960, Mr. Patterson was the only speaker at the Second Annual Meeting of Permian Historical Society. At the spring meeting on 26 April 2003, he will be awarded a Honorary Life Membership in the organization. Congratulations to this fine historian.

Image: Bud Lindsey

Membership Dues

Dues for all memberships in Permian Historical Society are \$15 per year—individuals, libraries, museums, or any other organizations. There are no membership categories for families or for students. Life memberships for individuals are \$200; life memberships for organizations and institutions are no longer offered. Dues are payable at the beginning of each calendar year. Checks should be sent to:

Permian Historical Society
The University of Texas of the Permian Basin
4901 East University
Odessa, TX 79762.

Thanks to all who have paid 2003 dues. You keep PHS going.
Continuing list of those who paid 2003 dues:

Donna Bell	Barney McCasland
Dottie Britton	Ross McSwain
EBSCO Industries, Inc.	June White Morris
Todd Houck	Norman Stewart
Dr. H. Warren Gardner	Lewis Ormond
Dorothy Jones	Jackie Taylor
Nancy Jordan	Dr. J. Tillapaugh
Bud Lindsey	

The Biscuit Man and the Pound Cake Woman Will Bake Again For Spring Meeting

Because the biscuits and pound cakes received many compliments at the Fall 2002 meeting, **Peggy Kelton**, Membership Vice President, has invited the Upton County Bakers to return for another round of biscuit-making and pound-cake-baking at the spring meeting. The biscuit maker is **Gary Elliott** and the pound cake baker is **Patricia Patrick**. Both are from McCamey in Upton County. Our thanks and appreciation goes to these baking wizards.

Come enjoy biscuits cooked over an outdoors open fire and served with honey during happy hour. If the weather is good, members may gather around to watch the biscuit making by way of the west auditorium door. Golden Pound Cake will be featured as dessert with lunch. You will not be disappointed.

The job of the membership vice president is to assure members that meetings are entertaining and enjoyable. You will agree that Peggy is doing her job when you meet the Upton County Bakers.

Call For Papers

Permian Historical Society Program Vice President and his committee have issued a call for papers to be presented at Fall 2003 and Spring 2004 meetings. Potential presenters should contact **Todd Houck** at 915/570-8669. His email address is thouck@midland.edu. Although the special *History Along the Pecos* program for Fall 2003 in Monahans appears to be filled, there is space open for the Spring 2004 meeting.

The Program Committee has a goal of finding only interesting presentations for meetings. Personal reminiscences are important because of their wide appeal. *The Annual* Editorial Board publishes less-interesting papers that offer an honest view of regional history. If you have a story, submit it now.

Program For Spring 2003 Meeting

Petroleum Museum, Library, and Hall of Fame
1500 Interstate Highway 20 West, Midland, Texas
26 April 2003

Meet in Auditorium for Happy Hour and Program of Papers

- 9:00 a.m. Happy Hour with visiting, registration, coffee, hot biscuits
with honey **Peggy Kelton and the Upton County Bakers**
Stop by the book display; buy books to support PHS fund-raiser and
local writers **Sue Ann Damron, Chair**
- 10:00 a.m. Recognition of members/guests from Midland County **Peggy Kelton, Membership VP**
- 10:05 a.m. Program of Papers **Todd Houck, moderator**
Passenger Service on the Texas & Pacific Railway **Warren Taylor of Midland County**
*The writer holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Bethany College and a Master of Fine Arts from Fort Hays
State College in Kansas. He is a long-time art instructor at Midland College and a railroad enthusiast who
has published articles in various railroad periodicals.*
- 10:25 a.m. **Camp Melvin Revisited** **Bill Yeates of Tom Green County**
*Written by a geophysicist, this paper gives the writer's ideas about Camp Melvin from aerial and ground
reconnaissance. The writer is retired from Shell Oil Company and is president of
Concho Valley Archeological Society.*
- 10:45 a.m. **W. D. Allison: Most Noted Gunman** **Bob Alexander of Maypearl, Ellis County**
*Mr. Alexander is a retired special agent with the U. S. Treasury Department, a former city detective, and
currently is an adjunct professor of Criminal Justice at Navarro College in Waxahachie, Texas. His paper
promises an exciting story of law enforcement by an early Midland County sheriff in the 1890s.*
- 11:05 a.m. **Martha Plummer Roberson: Gentle Woman, Tough Medicine**
Jan Devereaux of Maypearl, Ellis County
*Ms. Devereaux is from the Permian Basin and graduated from Carlsbad High School. She works at Baylor
Medical Center at Waxahachie, Texas. This paper about an early Midland County woman is connected to Mr.
Alexander's paper that precedes it. This is the writer's first historical presentation.*
- 11:25 a. m. Casting of ballots for Best Presentation Award that will be given at the Fall 2003 meeting **Donna Bell**
Visiting and book shopping are encouraged until lunch is served.
- 11:45 a. m. **Catered lunch in the Central Area**
- 12:15 p.m. Prizes—Door, Costume, Permian Basin Resident for Longest Time, Best Presentation Award from Fall 2003
Meeting **Peggy Kelton, Membership and Awards Committee**
Best Article in *The Permian Historical Annual* 42 **Donna Bell, Best Article Chair**
Awards Program **J. Tillapaugh, Moderator**
Honorary Life Membership Awards to **Geniece Childress, Ann M. Clark, Nancy McKinley, Paul Patterson,**
June Reid, Mamie Shepperd, and Noble H. Smith
Special Recognition for Outstanding Service to **Mary Prudie Brown, Bobbie Jean Klepper, and**
Betty Orbeck
Introduction of Living Charter Members — **James M. Day, Enid Holm, Betty Orbeck, Mamie**
Shepperd, Charles Stroder, and Vernon A. Vasbinder
- 12: 35 p. m. Permian Pioneer Awards **Julia Cauble Smith, Awards Chair**
Eileen Welch, Permian Pioneer Presented by **Warren Gardner**
Bob Deavenport, Permian Pioneer Presented by **June Reid and Bud Lindsey**
- 1:00 p. m. Short general business meeting **Ross McSwain, President**
- 1:20 p.m. Adjournment of general meeting; board meeting for officers, directors, and ex-officio members, if called.

If undeliverable, please return to:

Permian Historical News

Post Office Box 2186

San Angelo, TX 76902

For complaints: cauble@cox.net



All PHS annual dues [individuals, libraries, museums, groups] are \$15. Send checks to **Permian Historical Society, The Univ. of TX of the Permian Basin, 4901 University Blvd., Odessa, TX 79762.**

More News of the Society

Necrology

Cecil Drake of Big Spring, who served on PHS Board of Directors for several years was killed in an automobile accident on 18 March 2003. Always a strong supporter of PHS, Cecil will be greatly missed.

Time to Pay 2003 Dues

Membership Secretary **Lorene Barbee** reports that only 54 individuals have paid dues for the current year. Last year, dues were received from 130 members. Send your \$15 to Permian Historical Society, The Univ. of TX of the Permian Basin, 4901 University Blvd., Odessa, TX 79762.

Nominations for Awards

PHS presents its four big awards in the spring of each uneven year. To nominate any living worthy individual, a member must submit a formal letter of nomination that documents the accomplishments of the nominee and a photograph or digital image of the nominee before December 31st of the year preceding the awards program to Awards Committee Chair: Julia Cauble Smith, 2905 Sentinel Drive, Midland, Texas 79701 or cauble@cox.net.

Criteria For Permian Historical Society Awards

Permian Academy of History is the highest award of merit and is given to one who has made outstanding contributions in the field of historical preservation or the development of historical resources of the Permian Basin. The recipient must be a resident of the Permian Basin and the work must be of area-wide significance.

Fellows of the Permian Historical Society is an award given to an individual who has published significant historical work concerning the Permian Basin. The author need not be a resident of the Permian Basin.

Permian Pioneers is an award given to an individual who has resided in the Permian Basin for fifty or more years and who has continuously worked for its religious, educational, cultural, recreational, or economic development.

Permian History Preservationist is an award given to one who has made substantial and outstanding historical contributions to the libraries, museums, and archival collections of the Permian Basin. The nominee need not be a resident of the Permian Basin.

Bookseller Fund-Raiser

Sue Ann Damron, Chair of Permian Historical Society Book Sale, invites booksellers and local writers to display books, maps, and historical items for sale at PHS spring and fall meetings. For questions, donations, suggestions, or table reservations for displayers, contact Sue Ann at 915/393-5790 or email her at sjd@crcom.net.

Permian Historical Society, in its goal of preserving regional history, wants to encourage local writers and booksellers in the sale of books about the Permian Basin and its people.

The displaying of books at regular meetings is not only an effort to promote the writing of local history, but it is a fund-raiser for the organization. A fee of 10 per cent is charged booksellers for each book sold. *As a member of PHS, readers have the important obligation of looking over and buying the offered books, maps, or historical items.*

Back issues of *The Permian Historical Annual* are offered at each meeting for the price of \$4 each or \$100 for a complete set. This special offer is in effect only as long as back issues are available.