

**Permian  
Historical Society**

The University of Texas of  
the Permian Basin Campus

Spring 2005



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Peggy Kelton  
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# Permian Historical News

## Permian Historical Society To Meet At Petroleum Museum in Midland on 23 April 2005

Next Meeting: 23 April 2005

Place: Petroleum Museum, 1500 Interstate 20 West, Midland, Texas

The spring meeting is scheduled to get underway at 9:30 A.M. with registration and Happy Hour. A full program will begin at 10:00 A.M. and runs to noon, when KD's Barbeque will cater a lunch for \$10 to those who pay in advance and \$12.50 to those who pay at registration. Contact **Peggy Kelton**, P. O. Box 901, McCamey, TX 79752 or 432/652-8738 or [PeggyKelton@direcway.com](mailto:PeggyKelton@direcway.com) for lunch reservations.

There is no registration fee for the meeting and attendees are not obligated to have lunch. Immediately following lunch, PHS president Ross McSwain will conduct a brief board of directors meeting. This is an open meeting, but only board members will vote.

### About the Fall 2004 Meeting

Almost one hundred members and guest attended the fall meeting in Big Spring, Texas. The meeting was held in the Dora Roberts Community Center, an excellent facility which has been the setting of PHS meetings in the past.

The Howard County Historical Commission and the Big Spring members of PHS provided coffee and snacks early in the morning and a tasty noon meal was catered by Christene's of Coahoma. **Sue Ann Damron**, with help from others, arranged for the decorations and scheduling of activities.

The program was excellent. **Dr. Stan Cosby**, pastor of The First United Methodist Church of Oklahoma City, gave a paper entitled "Range War Tragedy: The High Price of Settlement." **Tumbleweed Smith** of Big Spring presented his recently-produced video of the Big Spring refinery history. **Quail Dobbs** related some of his memorable experiences from thirty-five years as a rodeo clown. **Clarence Hartfield, Jr.**, of Big Spring spoke about "Lakeview School As I Remember It" from 1947 to 1961. And **Rhonda Campbell**, Curator of Hangar 25 Museum gave the history of that museum.

# News of Permian Historical Society

## President's Letter

Dear Friends of Permian Historical Society,

The past year has been an exciting one for our organization with an increase in membership, good earnings on our investments, and two superb meetings in the spring and fall. However, we also have had some disappointments in meeting our publications schedule as planned and in the loss of two very special persons who brought much to the society over many years of devoted service.

I know that every member joins me in expressing our sincere condolences to the families of **Betty Jean Orbeck** and **Dr. Warren Gardner**, both of whom served PHS with devotion and distinction. They are greatly missed.

As many of you know, Dr. Gardner was the longtime editor of *The Permian Historical Annual*. His long and valiant battle against cancer took him away from his duties at UTPB as well as kept him from completing the 2003 *Annual*. I am pleased to report that **Julia Cauble Smith**, a longtime member of the publications committee and contributor to *The Annual*, has accepted the editor's position and is now hard at work editing the next *Annual*. We are striving to deliver this *Annual* at the spring meeting in Midland. We are trying to get back to regular publication.

Please review this newsletter. Another super program is planned for the 23rd of April meeting in Midland.

Warmest wishes,

*Ross McSwain*

President, yonder1@juno.com

## From the Treasurer

It is time to pay your yearly dues to Permian Historical Society. There are many reasons for renewing your dues—preserving our history and learning from every program of papers. You are what keeps PHS interesting and fun. Look for your notice in the mail.

Dues remain at \$15 for single memberships, museums, and organizations and \$20 for family memberships.

**Sherry Phillips, Treasurer**

**P. O. Box 11, McCamey, TX 79752**

**432/652-8898 Jfuzz2@sbcglobal.net**

## Necrology

**Dr. H. Warren Gardner**, longtime professor and vice president at The University of Texas of the Permian Basin and an active member of Permian Historical Society from the time he arrived on campus, lost his battle with cancer on 22 December 2004. He was born 13 February 1939 in Kansas, where he grew up. Receiving advanced degrees in Kansas and Indiana, Dr. Gardner became a popular professor with a kind word for everyone. In 2003, Dr. Gardner received the Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Teaching. He was one of the three members who kept Permian Historical Society going in the late 1990s when it faced hard times. Everyone appreciated calling him a friend.



**Dr. Gardner and his wife, Alicia, on a happy day**

*Image: J. C. Smith*

**Betty Jean Wingate Orbeck** was the founding force behind Permian Historical Society and served in various offices in PHS over the many years, including Archivist and Executive Vice President, offices no longer a part of Permian Historical Society. She worked as the archivist at the Permian Basin Petroleum Museum and Hall of Fame over twenty-five years. She was a self-taught historian and researcher, who enjoyed regional history and contributed several articles to *The Permian Historical Annual*.

Betty died unexpectedly on 29 December 2004 while on a Christmas trip. Her many friends miss her.



**Betty Jean Wingate Orbeck**



Permian Historical Society Spring Meeting  
 Petroleum Museum, Library, and Hall of Fame  
 1500 Interstate Highway 20 West, Midland, Texas  
 23 April 2005

9:00 Happy Hour with visiting, registration, coffee, pastries, and juice

10:00 Introductory Remarks ..... **Ross McSwain**, president

Memorials ..... **Dr. J. Tillapaugh** and **Dr. M. Todd Houck**

Program of Papers ..... **Bud Lindsey**, Program Vice President, moderator

**The Cattleman’s Bank: The First National Bank of Fort Worth** ..... **Damon Kennedy**  
*Kennedy traces the importance of the Fort Worth bank on ranching in the Permian Basin.*

**West Texas Ranch Family** ..... **Mary Lou Midkiff**  
*The author has written a book about the history of her husband’s ranching family and discusses parts of that book in this presentation.*

**Martin County Convent** ..... **John Kennady**  
*As a local historian and dedicated schoolteacher, Kennady reports on a subject he has researched for many years.*

**The Story of Spurs and Spurs with Stories** ..... **Bud Poage**  
*Longtime collector of spurs, Poage exhibited some of his collection and told stories about each.*

**Odessa’s Bush Home** ..... **J. Tillapaugh**  
*Dr. Tillapaugh, a member of the original faculty at UTPB, reviews his study of President Bush’s home in Odessa.*

Casting of ballots for Best Presentation Award that will be given at  
 the Fall 2005 meeting ..... **Donna Bell**, chair

**Catered lunch by K-D’s Barbeque**

Awards and Prizes ..... **Peggy Kelton**

Short general business meeting ..... **Ross McSwain**, President

**Call For Papers**

Permian Historical Society Program Committee welcomes papers to be presented at the Fall 2005 and Spring 2006 meetings. Contact **Bud Lindsey** at budro@rcrom.net. Scholarly papers and reminiscences are accepted. *The Permian Historical Annual* publishes reminiscences which need no documentation. Scholarly papers should be documented, well researched, and clearly written. More information and guidelines for submitting papers for publication are found in the back pages of *The Permian Historical Annual*. You may contact the editor, Julia Cauble Smith, at cauble@cox.net.

If undeliverable, please return to:  
**Permian Historical News**  
**Post Office Box 2186**  
**San Angelo, TX 76902**



## More News of the Society

### Latest Permian Historical Annual Mailed

Members who did not pick up their copies of *The Permian Historical Annual* at the Fall 2004 Meeting should have received their copies in the mail by this date. The latest *Annual* is Number 42 (2002). The front cover features a windmill in a ranch scene and is a reproduction of a 1955 painting by Bessie Parker. It was supplied to the Editorial Board by Parker House Ranching Museum.

*The Permian Historical Annual* began publication in August 1961. Each member is entitled to a copy of *The Annual* with each year's dues. Those who submit articles to the publication get four copies as well as the membership copy.

Number 43 will be distributed at the spring meeting in Midland. A new volume will be distributed each meeting until the publication is current. **Julia Cauble Smith** is the new editor. The advice and work of the former editor, the late **Dr. H. Warren Gardner**, is missed.

**Membership Secretary Lorene Barbee requests that anyone with a new address should remember to send it to her.**

**Lorene Barbee, 5901 East Midway Road, Big Spring, TX 79720 (432/263-1053) lbarbee@apex2000.net**

### Fall 2005 Meeting Scheduled

The Fall 2005 Meeting will be held in Crane, Texas, on 15 October 2005. **Charles Stroder** and **Joe Allen**, longtime residents of Crane and Crane County are working on the program for this meeting.

The field trip after the meeting is a tour of the historic Castle Gap near Crane. Castle Gap was the subject of **Gary Cutrer's** excellent presentation at the Fall 2003 Meeting in Monahans, Texas.

**Dr. Terrance Shults** and a group of cowboy singers plan to entertain attendees at lunch during this fall meeting. They may be persuaded to sing for those who arrive early at the meeting.



**Sixth Street Community Center is the site for the PHS Fall 2005 Meeting.**

*Image: Bill Dawson*