

Permian Historical News

Volume 1, Issue 3
Winter 2006



From our cabin to yours:

We wish you holidays of wet rains, warm fires, and good food with family and friends.

Original pen-and-ink drawing by James R. Snyder

Permian Historical Society

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PHS Officers

Peggy Kelton, President
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James Collett, V P-Membership
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Midland County: Nancy McKinley
Pecos County: Rosemary Rogers
and Snap Woodward
Terrell County: Charlena Chandler
Upton and Midland counties: Mary Lou Midkiff

President's Letter

Dear Friends,

You folks who were unable to attend the meeting in Iraan really missed a good one. It not only had great presentations, good books for sale, and great food, but it also had a lot of good fun. The wearing of costumes is catching on with many members and adds some excitement and fun to the meetings. Iraan proved to be an excellent host for our meeting with its rich history and friendly people.

Mark your calendar now for the spring meeting which will be held at the Petroleum Museum in Midland on Saturday, April 21, 2007. Presenters are already lining up to be on the program. Then in October 2007, the fall meeting will be held in Stanton. They are already making plans and preparations. Stay tuned and watch for your newsletter either by e-mail or regular postal service for further information on the meetings.

I do hope to see many of you in Midland and I encourage you to bring friends with you. You do not have to be a member to attend any of the meetings. Y'all come.

Cordially,
Peggy Kelton

President

Images of the Fall Meeting

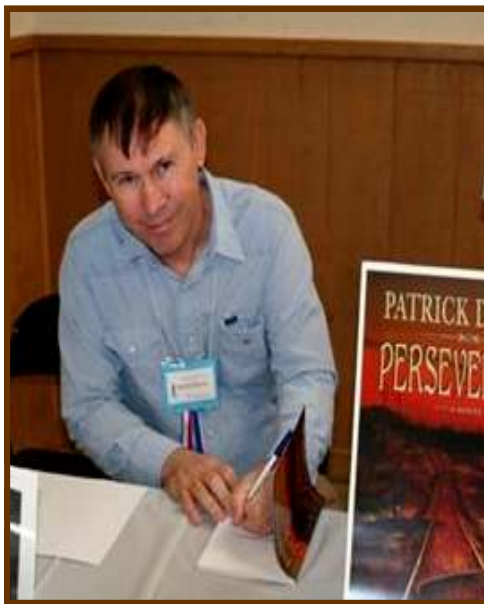


These women are our leaders? Left, President **Peggy Kelton** presides at the board meeting with a bone in her hair and another for a gavel. Secretary **Sue Ann Damron**, in character as a cave woman, records the minutes. The costumes were worn in honor of the *Alley Oop* comic strip and its creator's hometown of Iraan. *Image: Bud Lindsey*



Charles Stroder, Life Member and former PHS president from Crane, told of growing up in the Lion Oil Camp at Wink, Texas, at the fall meeting.

Image: Lane Bond



Patrick Dearen spoke about his father's adventures riding the rails during the Great Depression of the 1930s. He is shown above signing one of his books in the Booksellers Shop at the fall meeting.

Image: Lane Bond



The fashionable bracelet at the right was worn by **Snooks Collett** of Iraan Archeological Museum at the fall meeting as part of her Queen Ompa costume and in honor of the comic strip, *Alley Oop*.

Image: Bud Lindsey



Vice President/Program **Betty Cash** talked about the influence of the political comic strip, *Alley Oop*, and its creator on the town of Iraan. Betty is librarian at Iraan Library, where she gets emails asking for the pronunciation of the town's name and if it is located in a foreign country.

Image: Bud Lindsey

Images of Some Booksellers



Donna Bell helped out where she was needed in the Booksellers Shop.

Image: Lane Bond



Mary Lou Midkiff sold copies of her book of Midkiff family history.

Image: Lane Bond



Bud Lindsey displayed his book about his military experiences and his life as a prisoner of war.

Image: Lane Bond



Mary Prudie Brown holds a copy of *Mary Queen of Scots*.

Image: Lane Bond



Retiring President **Ross McSwain** and his wife, **Jean**, exhibited Ross' *Texas Politics and Greed* at the Booksellers Shop.

Image: Lane Bond

Other Images from Fall Meeting



These fine young men were part of the color guard that presented the flags at the fall meeting. They kindly stayed for lunch and helped clean up after the meeting. We were honored to have them in attendance.

Image: Lane Bond



Representing Howard County from left are **Craig Fischer** now of San Antonio, **Janice Bond**, and **Roger Goertz**. They enjoyed the presentations, visiting, book browsing, and barbeque.

Image: Lane Bond

Permian Historical Society Attendance Contest Fall Meeting in Iraan, Texas, 21 October 2006

Crockett County

Patsy and Mark White

Crane County

Pedie and Ted W. Hogan,
Nita and Gordon Hooper
James and Frances Stewart
Charles and Evelyn Stroder
Genny Townsend
Amanda and Fred Wilkinson

Ector County

Richard Cummins
Eula and Marshall Huffman
J. Tillapaugh, PhD
Brandon Young

Howard County

Janice H. and Lane Bond
Sue Ann and John Damron
Freda Johnson, Sue Ann's mother
Roger Goertz
Clarence Hartfield, Jr.

Martin County

Mary Prudie Brown
A. L. [Bud] Lindsey
Helen Thrailkill

Midland County

Jim Bradshaw
Jim and Jo Ann Collett
Patrick Dearen
James V. Humphrey
Mary Lou Midkiff
Julia Cauble Smith

Pecos County*

Barbara and John Carpenter
Kaleb and Jacob Johnson, Carpenter grandsons
Betty and Duane Cash
Edna M. [Snooks] Collett
June Heck, mayor of Iraan
Lynn Holland, Sr.
Suzanne O'Bryan
Edwin Rathbun, M. D.
Seven members/advisors of the color guard

Terrell County

Charlena Chandler

Tom Green County

Ross and Jean McSwain

Upton County

Donna Bell
Peggy and Jack Garner
Peggy Kelton
Lige Midkiff
Barbara Spratt

Other Counties

Walter Blackwell of Carrizo Springs, Dimmit
County [brother of Donna Bell]
Craig V. Fischer of San Antonio, Bexar County
Jeff Fischer of Boerne, Kendall County

**Pecos County is the winner with eighteen attendees. Crane County had eleven representatives. The winning county receives a one-year free membership in PHS for a library or museum in the county as a gift from an anonymous donor. For this award, the donor agreed to one-year memberships for both Iraan Library and Iraan Archeological Museum.*



Above: **Snooks Collett** of Iraan Archeological Museum in costume as Queen Ompa, the power behind the throne of Moo

Image: Bud Lindsey

About Our Members

PHS has many members who are dedicated to regional history and we are proud of them.

Jean Reid of Midland was featured in an article in *Midland Reporter-Telegram* on 28 August 2006. Jean is a native New Yorker, who was taught an appreciation for history by her grandmother. After World War II, Jean came to Stanton in Howard County with her late husband, **Aubrey**.

Anxious to show his bride the wonders of West Texas, Aubrey took her to many historic places. One of those places was Fort Davis, but the old military fort did not look as it does today. It stood in ruin with paint splashed on its walls and with no one to remember its part in settling the West. Jean could not believe that such a historic site was not preserved since where she came from historic sites were all around and they were preserved. She knew she had to do something for this forgotten old fort.

Jean wrote to Congressman R. T. Rutherford of Odessa, who wrote back. The congressman confessed he had never been to the Davis Mountains, even though he had grown up in Odessa. However, he was interested enough, as a member of a sub-committee of the Interior Department, to research the problem. The congressman learned that the old fort sat on private property. Other Texans—including **Lady Bird Johnson** and **John Ben Shepperd**—also joined in the effort to preserve the fort.

The federal government eventually bought the land with the plan to restore the fort. Fort Davis National Historic Site was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1960 and became part of the National Park System in 1961.

PHS is grateful to Jean Reid, Lady Bird Johnson, and John Ben Shepperd for proving that history-minded people can make a difference. At the Spring 2007 meeting of Permian Historical Society, the Awards Committee will present Jean Reid with the Permian Pioneer Award in recognition of her contribution to regional history over more than fifty years in the basin.

Certificate of Appreciation Awardees

At the fall meeting on 21 October 2006 at Iraan, Texas, Certificate of Appreciation awards were made to three of our members who have passed their ninetieth birthdays and continue their interest and work in regional history. They are **Nancy Rankin McKinley** and **Frances Walker** of Midland County and **Paul Patterson** of Crane County.

Mrs. McKinley has served for years as chairman of the Midland County historical group and is active in other historical and lineage organizations, as she continues to head Midland County Museum. As a former president of PHS, she currently serves on the Board of Directors. She will speak briefly at the spring meeting about PHS field trips of the past.

Mrs. Walker is a retired schoolteacher and an avid family historian. Always interested in regional and state history as well as genealogical topics, she will speak briefly at the spring meeting about her work and interest in original landowner maps from the General Land Office of Texas.

Mr. Patterson is a beloved teacher and mentor. He is widely-known for his many writings about the Permian Basin. Often a speaker at PHS meetings in the 1960s and 1970s, he was honored at the Fall 2005 meeting with a tribute by Elmer Kelton, a former student. At the Spring 2007 meeting, Mr. Patterson will become a Fellow of Permian Historical Society, along with **Elmer Kelton**, **Ross McSwain**, and **Patrick Dearen**.



Paul Patterson, left, received his Certification of Appreciation at his residence after the fall meeting, surrounded by friends.

Image: Donna Bell

Vintage Postcards Tell Our History



The Settles Hotel was built in 1928 and became a landmark for Big Spring, the seat of Howard County. This once proud hotel, which lodged ranching families and oil promoters visiting town as well as railroad employees, cross-country travelers, and celebrities including Elvis Presley and Lawrence Welk, stood vacant for several years. With its recent purchase by the Settles Hotel Development Company, the Settles will be restored for business and residential use. It stands as a tribute to the high hopes for future growth held by many small West Texas towns in the early twentieth century. Changes in the economy, agriculture, transportation, and technology in the second half of that century left many small towns without the growth they once expected, but small towns remain the foundation and guiding influence of life in the Permian Basin of West Texas. PHS proudly salutes the Settles Hotel and its future restoration.



Permian Historical Society is dedicated to preserving and recording the history of the Permian Basin of West Texas. Officers and committee members invite suggestions and recommendations for paper presentations and for articles to be published in *The Permian Historical Annual* or the Special Series books.

Beginning 1 January 2007, dues will increase to \$25 for individuals, libraries, museums, and other organizations.

Family dues are \$30 and student memberships are \$12.

Dues checks should be sent to:
Sherry Phillips, PHS Treasurer
P. O. Box 11
McCamey, TX 79752

Dues for 2007 may be paid before the end of the year at the current rate of \$15 for individuals and organizations and \$20 for families. Hurry if you want to save money!

2006-2008 Committee Appointments

Archives: Chair Peggy Kelton, Nancy McKinley, Jean Reid, Mary Prudie Brown, Betty Cash, Genny Townsend, and Elizabeth Heath

Awards: Co-Chairs Peggy Kelton and J. C. Smith, James Collett, Ross McSwain, Patsy White, and Donna Bell

Best Article: Chair J. C. Smith, Ross McSwain, Patsy White, James Collett, and Donna Bell

Best Presentation: Chair Donna Bell and Peggy Kelton

Executive: President Peggy Kelton, Betty Cash, James Collett, Sue Ann Damron, Sherry Phillips, Dr. J. Tillapaugh, Bud Lindsey, Ross McSwain, and J. C. Smith

Hospitality Chair: Jeanette Paige and friends

Investment: Chair Dr. J. Tillapaugh, Peggy Kelton, Betty Cash, Sherry Phillips, and Ross McSwain

Membership: Chair James Collett and friends

Newsletter: Editor J. C. Smith, Photographer Bud Lindsey; Print Copy Mailers—Peggy Kelton, Sherry Phillips, Donna Bell, and Jeanette Paige

Permian Historical Annual Editorial Board: Editor Julia Cauble Smith, Peggy Kelton, Dr. J. Tillapaugh, Ross McSwain, Evelyn Stroder, and Book Review Editor Charlena Chandler

Program: Chair Betty Cash, Peggy Kelton, James Collett, Sue Ann Damron, Sherry Phillips, Dr. J. Tillapaugh, Bud Lindsey, Ross McSwain, and J. C. Smith

Publicity: Bud Lindsey

**Spring 2007 Meeting is planned at the Petroleum Museum in Midland on 21st of April and
Fall 2007 Meeting at Stanton in Martin County.**