

The Heart of Texas

Newsletter of the Central Texas Historical Association

Fall/Winter 2016

FROM THE DIRECTOR



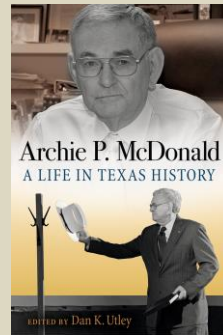
Dear CTHA Members,

CTHA has enjoyed another successful year. As 2016 comes to an end, I want to thank all of our members for their support and encouragement. As I have often commented, learned societies are true reflections of their membership. CTHA is blessed with a core group of charter members, and the Association's future is bright. Since its creation, CTHA has held three symposia, co-sponsored four events with Blinn College's Division of Social Sciences, organized four joint sessions with other regional history associations, participated in several community events, and steadily increased our membership. We now have 77 members. Additionally, we are in the final stages of printing our first annual journal and in the process of building our program for our first annual conference. Though we have endured growing pains during the past year, I have thoroughly enjoyed watching the Association mature into a respectable organization.

There are several people that I would like to give a special thanks for their service to the Association. First, I want to applaud the efforts of the CTHA President, **Dr. Larry Watson**. Dr. Watson has done an admirable job. His support, dedication, and advice have proven valuable to the Association's success. Dr. Watson has set a high standard for future presidents to follow. Also, I want to thank **Dr. Kirk Bane**, the CTHA Managing Editor. He has spent countless hours working on the first volume of *Central Texas Studies*. I think most members will be pleased with the fruits of his labors. Furthermore, I am extremely appreciative of **Dr. Charles Grear** and his efforts in making the 2016 Fall Symposium a success. He was a tremendous help in organizing the symposium and working closely with the faculty and administration at Central Texas College. Primarily due to his efforts, the 2016 Fall Symposium was a marvelous experience for all in attendance. Finally, I want to express a debt of gratitude to **Patricia**

Benoit. Though she was unable to attend the 2016 Fall Symposium, she wrote a fine article advertising the event. Her piece, "[Backroads: Killeen event to focus on frontier violence.](#)" appeared in the *Temple Daily Telegram* (click on title above to read the article). Her article certainly spurred interest in the symposium and increased attendance.

Recently, I read **Dan Utley's** edited book, *Archie P. McDonald: A Life in Texas History*. This is an outstanding biographical account of Dr. McDonald, a man many of us considered a great Texas historian, but perhaps more importantly, an exceptional friend. Additionally, the work serves as a history of the East Texas Historical Association, an organization that I have been a member of for many years. Professor Utley may not fully appreciate what his work means to me. As the Executive director of CTHA, I have learned



many lessons about running a regional history association the hard way—through trial and error. As I read Professor Utley's book, I took great comfort in knowing that Dr. McDonald faced many similar obstacles in his long tenure as the Director of ETHA. In many ways, the voice of this famous Texas sage jumps from the page, offering sound guidance on how to navigate the potential pitfalls confronting a young director of a newly minted organization. I will keep this work close at hand and will undoubtedly wear its pages thin, seeking the advice of my dearly departed friend. There is no doubt in my mind—this book should be required reading for all officers of any learned society. The only regret that I have concerning the book is that it was not published a couple of years earlier, when we were in the early process of founding the CTHA. Thank you Dan for this wonderful gift to the profession.

Sincerely,
Kenneth W. Howell
Executive Director

2016 FALL SYMPOSIUM

“Frontier Violence, Depredations, Outlaws, and Rangers”



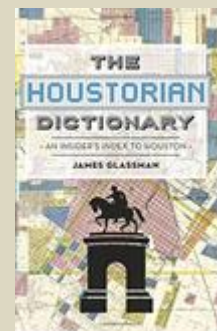
The 2016 Fall Symposium was held at Central Texas College in Killeen, Texas, on October 22. There were approximately sixty attendees at the event and more than seven vendors, including Texas A&M University Press and the West Point Society of Central Texas. This was the first CTHA symposium held in a distant location in Central Texas. The faculty, staff, and administration at Central Texas College were superb hosts, and the facilities (Anderson Campus Center) were exceptional. A special debt of gratitude is owed to **Dr. Tracy Cook**, Chair of the Division of Social Sciences at Central Texas College. Through her support, Dr. Cook helped to make this a memorable event. The presenters were flawless in their presentations. **Donaly Brice** spoke on the “The Great Comanche Raid;” **Henry B. Crawford** provided an informative and entertaining living history presentation, “Confronting Violence on the Military Frontier: Preparing and Outfitting the Army soldier for Patrol and Battle;” **Bill O’Neal**, the Texas State Historian, discussed the evolution of the “Texas Gunfighters;” **Bob Alexander** followed Bill’s presentation with an examination of the Texas Rangers Frontier Battalion in his “Winchester Warriors: Frontier Battalion Rangers;” **Chuck Parsons** dazzled the

audience with his stories about the infamous John Wesley Hardin in his presentation, “John Wesley Hardin: A Violent Texas Icon;” and **Carol Taylor’s** “Violence and Deception: The Outlaw Career of Ben Bickerstaff” provided details of another notorious outlaw’s activities in Northeast and Central Texas. Given the descriptions of violence, crime, death, and cruelty, most of the attendees left the symposium with one thought in mind: “I am glad that I wasn’t born in the ‘good ole days’ of the late 1800s.” As is customary, Hollywood’s version of the frontier does not come close to explaining the hardships frontier settlers encountered.

MANAGING EDITOR’S CORNER



Dr. Howell and I are genuinely excited about the impending publication of the inaugural volume of *Central Texas Studies*, which will feature three articles, a host of book reviews, a notes and documents section, and an interview with prominent Texas historian Ty Cashion. We are making final edits before sending the journal to the printer. Watch for it in your mailbox by mid-January. (Incredibly, we have already started assembling the December 2017 volume!) Heads up, H-Town enthusiasts. Bayou City historian James Glassman has recently published *The Houstonian Dictionary: An Insider’s Index to Houston* (Charleston, South Carolina: History Press, 2015). An A-Z guide to all things Houston, Glassman’s book is both enlightening and entertaining. To get a good idea of what his engaging text offers, consider the following three entries: **Adair, Red (1915-2004)**: Native Houstonian and world-renowned oil well firefighter and offshore oil rig blowout capping specialist from 1959 to 1993. John Wayne played him in the 1968 movie *Hellfighters* with all of the requisite Houston swagger. **Hogg, Ima (1882-1975)**: Daughter of Texas governor Jim Hogg. She created a



high standard for philanthropy, civic engagement and preservation in Houston. She organized the Houston Symphony Orchestra in 1913. She filled her River Oaks home Bayou Bend with art and antiques, and it became a museum in 1966. Known as “Miss Ima” and “the First Lady of Texas.” **Rice Stadium:** Houston’s first large-scale football stadium, built in 1950. Besides Rice Owls football, it was home to the Houston Oilers before the Astrodome, hosted University of Houston football from 1951 to 1965 and welcomed rock concerts, many college bowl games, the Super Bowl in 1974 and President Kennedy’s “We Choose To Go To The Moon” speech in 1962.

Perhaps Glassman’s informative dictionary will inspire state historians to compile similar volumes for San Antonio, Dallas, Austin, Fort Worth, and other Texas cities. Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season. Keep on reading!

Kirk Bane
Managing Editor

CTHA FEATURED MEMBER

CTHA’s featured member is **Dr. Cary D. Wintz**, the Association’s First Vice President. Dr. Wintz is widely known as an author and historian, specializing in African American and Texas history.



In addition to his numerous publications on African American history, Dr. Wintz is a recognized authority on Texas, having written or edited several acclaimed books. His most noted publications in this field include *Discovering Texas History* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2014);

Texas: The Lone Star State (Prentice Hall, 2010); and *Major Problems in Texas History* (Wadsworth, 2002).

Born on February 12, 1943, in Houston, Cary De Cordova Wintz earned his B.A. in history from Rice University in 1965, and later received an M.A. and Ph.D. in history from Kansas State University, where he studied under esteemed historian Stephen Ambrose. In

1971, Dr. Wintz accepted a position on the faculty of Texas Southern University. He currently holds the rank of Distinguished Professor in the Department of History and Geography at TSU.

CTHA is fortunate to have Dr. Wintz as the incoming president in April 2017. His experience and expertise will serve the Association well.

CTHA FEATURED PUBLICATION

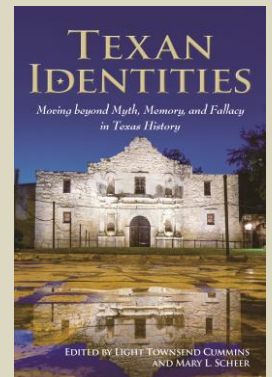
The featured publication for this issue of the newsletter is *Texan Identities: Moving beyond Myth, Memory, and Fallacy in Texas History* (University of North Texas Press, 2016), edited by CTHA members, **Light Townsend Cummins** (Professor of History, Austin College & former Texas State Historian) and **Mary L. Scheer** (Professor of History, Lamar University). This work rests on the assumption

that Texas has distinctive identities that define “what it means to be Texan,” and that these identities flow from myth and memory. *Texas Identities* seeks to answer several relevant questions: What constitutes a Texas identity and how may such change over time? What myths, memories, and fallacies contribute to making a Texas

identity? Are all the myths and memories that define Texas identity true or are some of them fallacious? Is there more than one Texas identity?

The discussion begins with the idealized narrative and icons revolving around the Texas Revolution, most notably the Alamo. The Texas Rangers in myth and memory are also explored. Other essays expand on traditional and increasingly outdated interpretations of the Anglo-American myth of Texas by considering little known roles played by women, racial minorities, and specific stereotypes such as the cattleman.

Walter Buenger, Professor of History at Texas A&M University, states that “This work adds greatly to the literature on Texas identities and the variety of the Texas experience. All of the essays are well done and



cover neglected topics.” Ty Cashion, Professor of History at Sam Houston State University, suggests that the work “makes a contribution to the historiography at a time when identity and the role of myth and memory are topics commanding the attention of scholars.”

Undoubtedly, this important volume will shape future scholarly trends in Texas history.

2017 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

CTHA will hold its first Annual Conference on April 28-29, 2017. The event will take place in the Student Center on Blinn College’s Brenham Campus. For those planning to stay overnight, CTHA has made arrangements with three hotels in Brenham, all of which are a short drive to Blinn College. At this time, we are making final arrangements to program, but we have already received many exciting proposals for sessions and panels. If you are considering a session/panel for the conference, please contact Dr. Charles Gear (charles.grear@ctcd.edu), or Dr. Kenneth W. Howell (khowell@blinn.edu), before January 1, 2017. We are trying to fill 12-15 sessions for the meeting. For more information on the conference, please visit the CTHA website (www.centexhistassn.org).



2017 FALL SYMPOSIUM

The date and location for the 2017 Fall Symposium has been set. The event will be held at the Museum of the American G.I. on Saturday, September 23, 2017. CTHA is in the process of finalizing the program. At this time, the following presenters have agreed to speak: **Gregory Ball, Jennifer Bridges, Sanders W. Marble, Paul Spellman, and Lila Rakoczy.** The staff at the Museum of the American G.I. is excited about hosting the event and plans to organize a special WWI display in their newly built facility, located just south of College Station. More information about the symposium will be posted on the CTHA website (www.centexhistassn.org).



2017 MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE

CTHA membership continues to grow at a steady pace. However, the Association officers would like to see the membership double this coming year. In an effort to reach this goal, Director Howell is encouraging each existing member to recruit at least one new member. This is a perfect time to recruit, since membership renewals for all levels below Life Membership are due January 1, 2017. Additionally, we want to make the recruitment effort a friendly competition. As such,

the member who recruits the largest number of new members will receive free registration to the 2017 Fall Symposium, "Texans in WWII." In order to keep a correct tally, please instruct the members that you recruit to email the CTHA Executive Director, or write on the mail-in membership form, your name, so you will receive credit for recruiting them. Of course, do not forget to renew your membership that counts toward your total. Good luck on finding new members, and thank you for your continued support of the Association.

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE 2016 FALL SYMPOSIUM

Friends gathering for dinner the night before the symposium.



Henry B. Crawford discussing the experiences of Army soldiers on the Texas frontier. Crawford's display of equipment and tools on the table to his left was popular with attendees.



Donaly Brice analyzing the 1840 Great Comanche Raid, including events surrounding the attacks on Victoria and Linnville.



Bill O'Neal, Texas State Historian, offering an informative presentation on Texas gunfighters, emphasizing the evolution of pistols in the late 19th century.



Bob Alexander discussing the Frontier Battalion Rangers, highlighting documents he has examined over the years.



Carol Taylor describing the notorious Benjamin Bickerstaff and his outlaw gang, who terrorized Northeast and Central Texas during the Reconstruction era.



Chuck Parsons narrating the tale of John Wesley Hardin, infamous Texas outlaw. Parsons is the author of the definitive account of Hardin, A Lawless Breed (University of North Texas Press, 2013).



Approximately 60 people attended the 2016 Fall Symposium. The facilities at Central Texas College were outstanding. CTHA looks forward to returning to the Killeen area for future events.

CTHA appreciates Gail Swanlund for serving as the photographer at the 2016 Fall Symposium and for helping with registration. Gail has been a tremendous asset to CTHA from its inception.