



Membership Newsletter March 2010

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## Programs Scheduled for the Next Few Months

Please note that some of the information is different from the last newsletter and recent emails. Mark your calendars to ensure you attend these great programs!

**MAR 11** **Sam Rosen** will speak about his family's contribution to the North Fort Worth Rosen Heights development, "From Immigrant Peddler to land Developer." Mr. Rosen is a senior partner with Shannon, Gracey, Ratliff & Miller.



*Rosen*

**APRIL 8** **Gene Allen Smith**, professor of history, director of the Center for Texas Studies at TCU, and curator of History at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, will offer a presentation on the Museum's renewed focus on history. The first major Fort Worth history exhibition uses the street car as a way to understand the growth and development of city. Looking at five distinct parts of the city that the street car visited, visitors can observe how different parts of the city contributed to Fort Worth's unique story. Join us as we explore that journey.



*Smith*

**MAY 13** **Libby Willis** will present a program to NFWHS in May on Oakhurst's history and the historical connections between Oakhurst and the North Side. When revered Fort Worth businessman John P. King developed the Oakhurst neighborhood in 1924, many North Side families involved in various Stockyards and other businesses moved there. The Society supported the Oakhurst Neighborhood Association's project to list the Oakhurst in the National Register as a way to obtain more historical documentation on the connections between the neighborhood and the North Side. Libby Willis is president of the Fort Worth League of Neighborhoods. She served for five years as president of the Oakhurst Neighborhood Association where she led the project to list the 710 household Riverside neighborhood as a district in the National Register of Historic Places, the largest neighborhood in Tarrant County to be so listed since 1990.



*Willis*

**JUNE 10** **Shirley Apley** will present a program entitled, "Soiled Doves: An Historical Look at Prostitution in Fort Worth." Shirley comes from South Dakota and has worked for the Fort Worth Library for over 15 years. She has taught "Advanced Genealogy" classes at Tarrant County College and enjoys research and working with others to find their family heritage.



*Apley*

**Mark Your Calendars to Attend Each One of these  
Great Programs This Spring!**

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## Black History Month at the Museum Featured Billy Pickett and other Great Black Cowboys and Trail Herders

After Emancipation and the Civil War, thousands of Blacks went to work on the ranches throughout south and west Texas, and subsequently rode the cattle trails northward. It is estimated that 1/3 of all cowboys were either of Hispanic or African-American heritage. Following the Civil War, freed slaves left their masters and plantations to make a new life for themselves. Many African Americans moved out west in hopes of buying land and settling down, and some even set up all-black communities.

However difficult and financially unrewarding it was to be a cowhand, for the former slaves it meant something entirely different. There, men could build up a sense of self, earn wages to support their families, and realize their full potential as free men. As one would imagine, some of the ranchers who employed African-Americans did not pay them as much as they paid white workers, and it is also obvious who the worst chores went to. However, no amount of racial discrimination could discourage these men from earning the respect they deserved, whether it be because of their skills, or their courage.

One of the most impressive displays of skill and courage, and part of what gave cowboys their mystique, was their use of a lasso for roping calves and horses, and their talent at "breaking" these wild animals so they could be herded and put into the service of man. In the late 1800s, black cowboys such as Nat Love would gain much respect and admiration for displaying such skills. Sometimes their talent would even spare them from those who "disagreed" with emancipation.

Of the estimated 35,000 cowboys who worked the ranches and rode the trails, between five and nine



*Left: Nat Love became "Champion Roper of the Western Cattle Country" during the 1880s. Right Billy Pickett became a star bull-dogger, a rodeo event he invented in the early 20th century. He performed at the Southwestern Exposition and Fat Stock Show several times.*

thousand or more were said to have been Black. They participated in almost all of the drives northward and were assigned to every job except that of trail boss. One historian noted that there had been a few cattle drives where the entire crews were Black except for the trail boss.

Known by the nicknames "The Dusky Demon" and "The Bull-Dogger," Bill Pickett gave exhibitions in Texas and throughout the West. His performance in 1904 at the Cheyenne Frontier Days (America's best-known rodeo) was considered extraordinary and spectacular. He signed on with the 101 Ranch show in 1905, becoming a full-time ranch employee in 1907. The next year, he moved his wife and children to Oklahoma.

## Bob Ray Sanders Signed Books at the Museum on February 20

Many people visited the museum on Saturday, February 20, to visit with Bob Ray Sanders and get his signature on his new book, "Calvin Littlejohn: Portrait of a Community in Black and White." We sold many books and Mr. Sanders was a wonderful guest and shared some of his more interesting adventures as a young reporter with the Star-Telegram. Ron Abrams, Calvin Littlejohn's grandson also attended with some of his granddad's great photos.



# THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

*Tom Wiederhold*



Howdy Y'all and welcome to March madness! The weather seems to have settled down a bit and I look forward to some nice mild days.

The Museum hosted a book signing with Bob Ray Sanders and I had a great time talking about some of the days gone by. The book, a photo essay of Calvin Littlejohn's photos, is fantastic. I had the pleasure of working with Mr. Littlejohn from 1989 to around 1992 on projects on the Near South East side. He was a wealth of information and was always ready to talk about Fort Worth and it's past.

Dr. Platt has closed his doors and the book store is now empty. While I wish the Platts well, I sure will miss stopping in to see what new treasure he may have found.

It's all about changes and that's a bittersweet pill. While we often get comfortable with things "the way they were," we just can't stop change. Thus our mission becomes all that more important. We must be always be certain that we protect or preserve what we can in the best interest of the North Side and Fort Worth, as well as be willing to accept that some things will go away. I say this because there are **plans** to start making changes at the top of the hill where Swift and Amour once stood king! In the next five years or so we may see some major shifts in the horizon as some buildings disappear and others get refinished. Some buildings are going to have to be razed, It is my hope that the over all integrity of the area is saved

and the buildings that are saved are preserved in such a way that they are not only useful again but that they still allow future generations to witness a great past.

April 10th of this year is the Fort Worth Police open house. The theme for this year is "Women in Law Enforcement." I hope you will all come out to see the displays and what the Women of the FWPd have done through the years.

As a side note, if you have information or photographs that show women police officers in action of Ft Worth please let me know!

Thanks Y'all! See you Thursday night!

*Tom*

## Museum Musings ★ Joni Wells

**Membership Renewals.** The society and the museum are still dedicated to the preservation of the Stockyards and North Fort Worth's colorful history.

Membership is very important to the society as is your support of the Stockyards. Please renew your membership so the society can continue to progress. If you no longer are able to be a member or wish to drop your membership, please let me know. I will not send newsletters to anyone who has not renewed after March.

**New shelving is** in the Research Rooms ready to be constructed. During the next few months many of the artifacts will be labeled and stored here. Lateral files will be moved from the offices for easy access to photos and documents and information for searches. The books are organized and sorted for easy locating and we will acquire more as time goes on.

**Volunteers Are Needed:** the spring and summer seasons are very busy for the museum. To

ensure each visitor receives a great experience while in the museum, please consider volunteering two days per month to share your knowledge with our visitors. Currently the busiest days are Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. During the summer we will be open on Sundays from 12-5 p.m. Even if you can only help one day per month, this would greatly benefit the museum and the North Fort Worth Historical Society.

**Name Badges** are here for those who ordered them. Please contact Joni or see her at the next meeting.

# Archival Hints

Saving your family photos, old newspapers and other artifacts is really rewarding when you want to see what things were like many years ago. Just like the museum, many of us have many documents and photos. It's just as important to preserve these items as it is for a museum. For a small investment, purchase archival sleeves. Sleeves come in many different quality and quantity amounts, but even the less expensive are helpful in saving pictures and document.

We should also document our photos and documents. Create a list, by hand or on the computer, with as much information as you can gather. Then place the photos and documents in sleeves and file in a file cabinet or preferably a fire proof safe.

Scanning to a computer is now very easy. Scan each item and label it with the item's description (not the number the computer scanner assigns to it). Move the group to a folder appropriately named and save to a CD or DVD. Label the media disk and file in a safe place. Photos of artifacts: art, furniture, china, etc can also be saved to a disk for future reference.

## Spring and Summer Exhibitions and Events at the Museum

During the next six months, the Museum will feature toys used by youth of the early to mid 18th century. If you have any item that you can loan to us during that time, please call Joan at 817.625.5082. We may use items for the whole time or rotate with others.

**A big special thanks to Gerlind Capling** for arriving at the museum with great ideas for the children's displays. She has loaned us several old dolls and toys plus a book that discusses many of the different toys and activities employed by children a century ago. We will try to get a few items made that the kids may play with so they can experience what toys were like 100 years ago.

The saddle is still around for the kiddos to mount and have their picture taken. Photos and a poster or two will describe some of the activities long forgotten and the afternoon entertainment we experienced during our youth. If you have photos of you with a toy

or playing a game, please bring to the museum so we can scan it and use in the displays. Visuals are so good for the children's understanding.

**Book Signing—Lawana Mauldin and Susan Kline** will be at the museum on Saturday, April 10, from 1—3 p.m. to sign and discuss their new books about Fort Worth: "Lake Worth" by Mauldin and "Fort Worth Parks" by Kline. Both are from Arcadia Publishing.

**Visit the museum** during the next six months to find new books on a variety of regional and western subjects as well as Fort Worth's most complete selection of books on Fort Worth and the surrounding area.

A few changes in the shop area and the museum have been made thanks to a couple of new display cases and a book case purchased from Books, Etc. Visit us soon.

**Stockyards Goes Green—  
March 13**

### 2009-2010 NFWHS Officers

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### Museum Director

Joni Wells	817-625-5082
nfwhs@sbcglobal.net	

[www.StockyardsMuseum.org](http://www.StockyardsMuseum.org)

[nfwhs@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nfwhs@sbcglobal.net)

817.625.5082

FAX 817.625.5083

Museum Hours: Monday—