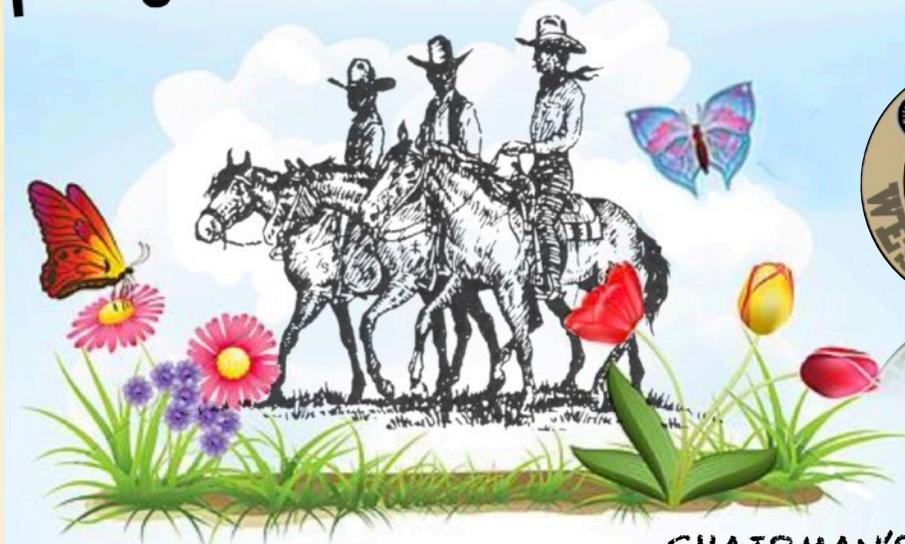


# BUCKSKIN BULLETIN



Volume LII - issue 1 - March 2020

## Springtime at the Home Ranch



### CHAIRMAN'S GREETING



WI Chairman, Bonney MacDonald  
Photo by Rik Anderson. WTAMU

**Happy Spring** to my fellow Westerners! The birds are returning, we're seeing green grass here in the Panhandle of Texas, and won't even mind if another snow day comes our way - Spring isn't far off!

Here at the Home Ranch we are in dues season and beginning the awards season - another reminder that it's Spring. We want to thank you in advance for sending in your annual dues and for sending us exciting award entries. This year, awards packets went out in February; the award-entry deadline is April 15. Dues notices went out in March; and dues are due May 1. We are excited to see the award entries that come in and hope you will all send us your interesting publications and programs.

Please keep up to date on the 3rd annual Westerners Gather, set for this fall and hosted by Pikes Peak Westerners in Colorado Springs. The Corral has a full and enriching program for us. It will be a beautiful time of year and we know you'll enjoy yourselves in Colorado!

Wishing you a great spring season -Happy Trails!

**Bonney**

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## 2020 DUES

This year, dues notices went out separately from the awards packets. The dues deadline this year is May 1, 2019; please include Dues Invoice and the Tally Information Sheets. Without current contact info for your officers from the tally sheets, we don't have a way of reaching sheriffs and other officers, and we don't have a way of emailing the Buckskin Bulletin to your corral or posse! So please be sure and include those out with your dues. Thank you!

We thank you in advance for sending in your dues. These monies fund all kinds of good things in Westerners – from the basics of keeping the lights on and the copier working, to the Bulletin, the office staff and supplies, the annual awards and scholarship monies, participation in Western History Association, and more! Thank you for your membership and dedication to this wonderful organization!

## Westerner Alvin R. Lynn Honored



Alvin and Nadyne Lynn



Alvin R. Lynn received the 2019 Curtis D. Tunnell Lifetime Achievement Award in Archaeology from the Texas Historical Commission at their recent conference in Austin, Texas. Alvin is a longtime member of the **Palo Duro Corral of Westerners International**.

Alvin grew up on a farm in rural Motley County, Texas. He is a retired social studies and science teacher and coach. With a lifelong passion for archaeology and Texas history, he now serves as a steward for the Texas Historical Commission.

Alvin has organized and participated in numerous archaeology projects including the first and second battle of Adobe Walls and the Red River Wars.

In 2014 Alvin wrote his acclaimed book, ***Kit Carson and the First Battle of Adobe Walls*** (Texas Tech University Press, [ttupress.org](http://ttupress.org)). This book is an account of the fifteen years he spent meticulously tracking Kit Carson's 200-mile expedition across northern New Mexico and the panhandle of Texas uncovering more than 1800 artifacts and correcting many historical errors about the first battle of Adobe Walls. Alvin is married to Nadyne and they live in Amarillo, Texas.

### REMINDER TO ALL SHERIFFS AND MEMBERS!

**Sheriffs:** Please remember to forward the Buckskin Bulletin to all of your corral or posse members. And please keep us up to date on your contact information – we want to stay in touch and we always appreciate all of your updates, newsletters, and publications!

**All Members:** Please be sure that your corral and posse sheriffs have your current email address so they can forward the Buckskin Bulletin to you! We want to be sure you're in the loop!

**The Buckskin Bulletin comes out four times a year. It's emailed to all sheriffs so that they can email it to their posse or corral members. The current Bulletin is also always available on the front page of the Westerners website; back issues are accessible on the website through the Buckskin Bulletin link.**

Volume LII - issue 1 - December 2020

# The First Murder on the South Plains of Texas: Who Killed Jim Jarrott?

By Chuck Lanehart, Llano Estacado Corral

In 1900, thousands of cattle grazed vast ranches on the South Plains of Texas, but humans were few and far between. Lubbock County residents totaled less than 300, and the combined populations of Hockley and Terry Counties numbered but 92.

With the passage of the Four Sections Act by the Texas Legislature, the times were about to change. The Act authorized a genuine Texas homesteader (not a land speculator) to purchase four sections of land from the State under very favorable terms. Across the frontier, hopeful small entrepreneurs scurried to take advantage of this great new opportunity to achieve the American dream.

Enter James William Jarrott, born in Alabama in 1862. Jarrott's family moved to Parker County, Texas, to escape the ravages of the Civil War. He attended Add-Ran College (now Texas Christian University), where he met Mollie D. Wylie, a beauty from Hood County. After graduation, they married in 1886, and moved to Weatherford. Soon, he won election to the Texas House of Representatives, where Jarrott won respect among his peers and developed a reputation as "fearless in speech." Among his friends in the Legislature was Charles Rogan, who would soon play a pivotal role in the settlement of the Llano Estacado.

When Jarrott left the Legislature, the family moved to Stephenville, where he studied law in the office of the local District Judge. Soon after he passed the bar exam in 1894, Jarrott was elected Erath County Attorney. But Jarrott was restless. Early in 1900, he traveled to Plainview to visit relatives, and he explored the windswept, treeless Llano Estacado, once part of the area known as "The Great American Desert." Then, he heard important news from his friend Rogan, now the Texas Land Commissioner.



Rogan had discovered a large slice of state-owned land west of Lubbock that had not been surveyed. He intended to place the land for sale under the lenient terms of the Four-Sections Act. But first, the land had to be surveyed. Jarrott paid for the survey, gaining an advantage over others coveting the land, soon to become known as "The Strip." The Strip extended 60 miles, east to west, from the western boundary of Lubbock County across the unorganized counties of Hockley and Terry to the New Mexico border. North-to-south, the land varied in width from two and one-half miles to five miles.

Swiftly, Jarrott—known to his friends as Jim—recruited 24 other families from the Erath County area to join the Jarrott family on the arduous 300-mile horse-and-wagon journey to the almost vacant South Plains. Mollie and their children packed the family belongings and headed west. Each family claimed four sections of fertile land. It was May of 1902.

The settlers were not greeted warmly by ranchers who had long grazed cattle on the grassy unfenced Strip. The ranchers tried intimidation and threatened violence, withheld precious water from windmills, and eventually filed lawsuits against the "nesters," claiming unfair practices by Jarrott for his failure to share the survey with ranchers. Among the settler's chief rivals were ranchers from the Lake-Tomb Cattle Company, an Illinois conglomerate.

Jim successfully defended his clients—the settlers—in the courtrooms of the few far-flung organized counties  
*continued*



available for the ranchers' claims. He also traveled to Austin to assert the settler's rights in the Texas General Land Office. He won all the lawsuits. By August, the settlers were legally established on The Strip.

On August 27, Jim left Mollie and his children at Lubbock's Nicolett Hotel, where Mollie had been recovering from an illness. The unarmed lawyer was bound for their homestead on The Strip in Hockley County. He never returned.

Jim's lifeless body was found near present-day Wolfforth, lying in a stock tank on the L7 Ranch, which belonged to the Lake-Tomb Cattle Company. He had been shot to death.

Jim Jarrott was only 41 years old. It was the first documented homicide on the South Plains of Texas.

The murder polarized the sparse South Plains population, as townsfolk and settlers on The Strip blamed powerful ranch interests for the killing. Ranchers spread rumors that Mollie was somehow responsible for her husband's death. A year later, murder and perjury indictments were handed down against four Lake-Tomb cowboys, but charges were eventually dismissed. The case went cold for decades.

Those responsible for Jim's death thought the nesters would be scared away, but they were wrong. Instead, the settlers prospered. Burdened with four children less than 15 years of age, Jim's 36-year-old widow Mollie successfully developed the land that had cost her husband his life. She expanded the original Jarrott claim from four to sixteen sections, where she raised a prime herd of registered Hereford cattle. She eventually remarried Monroe Abernathy, a real estate

developer and namesake of the City of Abernathy. Mollie and Monroe were instrumental in bringing the railroad to Lubbock in 1909, and she is considered Lubbock's first businesswoman. Descendants of the Jarrotts, the Abernathys and other Strip settlers still reside on the South Plains.

So, who killed James Jarrott? Historians agree the assassin was likely "Deacon Jim" Miller, one of the most infamous hired guns of the era, responsible for as many as 50 killings.

In his recent book, "Death on the Lonely Estacado: the Assassination of J.W. Jarrott, a Forgotten Hero," (UNT Press, 2017) author Bill Neal effortlessly connects Miller to the Jarrott murder, but he goes much further.

Neal's solid detective work—including legal research, real estate records and contemporary news accounts—points directly to the man who paid Deacon Jim to kill Lawyer Jarrott: Marion Virgil "Pap" Brownfield, a South Plains rancher allied with the Lake Tomb Cattle Company and other big ranch interests.

Until now, Pap Brownfield was not suspected of the crime (he died more than a century ago), but his legend—certainly less deserved than the legend of Jim Jarrott—lives on in the town that bears his name—Brownfield, located just miles from The Strip.

By contrast, the man who brought the first wave of settlers to the South Plains—in the tradition of Stephen F. Austin—is largely forgotten. There is no town, nor school, nor street named in honor of James W. Jarrott, and that's a shame.



**Chuck Lanehart** is a member of the **Llano Estacado Corral** in Lubbock, Texas. Chuck is a historian and an active writer of West Texas history. He is a shareholder in the Lubbock firm of Chappell, Lanehart & Stangl, PC, where he has practiced law since 1977. A 1977 graduate of Texas Tech University School of Law. Chuck was named among the "200 Most Influential People in the History of Lubbock" by the Lubbock Avalanche-Journal.



### THANK YOU TO PIKES PEAK WESTERNERS AND THE LA CORRAL!!

The Fall 2020 Gather will be hosted by the Pikes Peak Westerners in Colorado Springs, CO. and the 2021 Fall Gather will be hosted by the Los Angeles Corral in Los Angeles, CA. Information on the upcoming fall gather, September 10-12 in beautiful Colorado is on the next page.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



**September 10-12, 2020**

Gather in Colorado Springs for the . . .  
**2020 Westerners International Conference**

Hosted by the:  
**Pikes Peak Posse of the Westerners**  
 with support of the Denver Posse



Singer &  
 Colorado author

Roundup at Hotel Eleganté

Mix and mingle with fellow Westerners, authors and like-minded history buffs from far and near

- ◆ Meet & Greet reception
- ◆ Westerners Int'l award presentations
- ◆ Field trip to local sites
- ◆ Historical lectures
- ◆ Western dinner with live concert by acclaimed musician Jon Chandler at historic Al Kaly Mule Barn
- ◆ Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum tour
- ◆ Banquet speaker: John Fielder  
 ⇒ Renowned Colorado photographer / author

- **À la Carte conference options available**
  - \* Purchase the "package" or select piecemeal events
  - \* Guests are always welcome



Extend your stay and enjoy local attractions

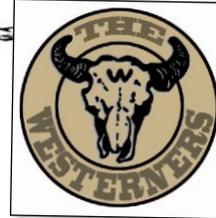


**Stay tuned for more details and pricing**

Contact info: Bob DeWitt, Conference Chair  
**posse@dewittenterprises.com** or call (719) 473-0330

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# CORRAL NEWS



## CORRAL UPDATES

The **LA Corral** reports that, in December, **Brian Dervin Dillon, Past Sheriff of the LA Corral**, presented a program on "Wyatt and Josie Earp: Fact, Fiction, and Myth." Winner of eight "Coke" Wood Awards, Brian has a distant family connection with the famous lawman; and Brian's younger brother and co-author on an article on the Earps, has worked for thirty years in the cemetery where Wyatt and Josie are buried. Brian reviewed the history of film portrayals of Earp and then discussed how most portrayals do not include the facts about the life of Wyatt or of Josie.

The **LA Corral's** January program on "Stories: The Myths, The Facts, The Realities," was presented by Mark Mutz; and the February program, "Wild West Gunslingers: Short Biographies of Various Gunmen, Lawmen, Feuds, and Their Outcomes," was presented by Randy King.

**Linda Cravens** reported that the **Scottsdale Corral's** December meeting focused on the City of Tempe, which is laying track for a new streetcar. Tempe History Museum curator, Josh Roffler, provided a sneak preview of the panels, which consist of historic photographs from the museum's collection. Josh Roffler is the Senior Curator of Collections and Archivist at the Tempe History Museum, where he has worked for 20 years. He holds degrees in Anthropology and Museum Studies from University of Arizona and Arizona State University. The Corral also had a holiday party and a toy drive.

The **Scottsdale Corral's** February program, presented by **Corral Sheriff, Jared Smith**, focused on Legend City, home to a theme park created by Louis Crandall. The park lasted for two decades and entertained hundreds of thousands of visitors and brought entertainers to Arizona.

**Cindy Martin** of the **Llano Estacado Corral** in Lubbock, Texas sent news of their Annual Banquet in January. The program, from Michael and Linda Melson, was on Joe Melson's successful career as a singer-songwriter. Joe is a member of the International Rockabilly Hall of Fame as well as the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame. Joe collaborated with Roy Orbison and his impressive songs, to name but a few, include "Only the Lonely," "Blue Bayou," and "Crying." Sounds like a wonderful night!

**Bob DeWitt** shared news of the **Pikes Peak Posse's** February meeting which featured a historical presentation "History of Pro Rodeo" by Megan Wiinterfeldt. Megan shared history of pro Rodeo, from the start of the World's First Rodeo in Deer Trail, Colorado on July 4th, 1869 to an overview of what Rodeo is today.

The March program for the **Pikes Peak Corral** in Colorado Springs was on "The Last Train from Cripple Creek" and was presented by corral member, **Mel McFarland**. Mel is an artist, author, historian, and railroad enthusiast. The program also included a meatloaf dinner that was finished off with peach cobbler!

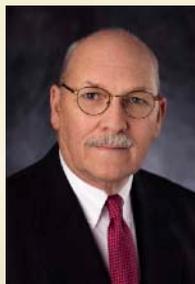


**Klaus and Marie Krizanovic, Co-Sheriffs of the Fort Collins Corral** reports that the February meeting included Robert Meroney presenting a program on "U.S. Currency, Art, History, and Symbolism".

The **Fort Collins Corral's** March gathering was a presentation by Jan Baldwin on "Pledging Brotherhood: An Introduction to Fraternal, Benevolent and Secret Societies".

## CALL FOR CORRAL AND POSSE UPDATES

*Please send us your notices on upcoming or past programs. We love to spread the good news to about the activities of fellow Westerners! You can email them to Ken Pirtle, Buckskin Bulletin Editor, at [kenneth.pirtle@me.com](mailto:kenneth.pirtle@me.com), or to the Home Ranch at [westerners@pphm.wtamu.edu](mailto:westerners@pphm.wtamu.edu)*



## 2020 AWARD FORMS

Awards entry forms were sent out in early February, and they can also be downloaded from the WI website. All award entries are due by April 15, 2020. You are all working on interesting programs and publications; let us know about your events and your work! We want to spread the good word and award you all for your efforts!

We thank you in advance for sending in your award entries. Each year the number of entries grows and that means that more and more Westerners are giving wonderful programs, writing important books, articles, and poems, and contributing to the overall good of this organization! Be sure to let your fellow members know what you're doing by sending in your nominations!



*Photo: Phil Brigandi at the Los Angeles Corral of Westerners's 70-year anniversary celebration, 2016. Paul Rippens photo.*

## Phil Brigandi, 1959-2019: A Remembrance

In 1977, I met Phil Brigandi when we both became the new, young men on the board of the Orange Community Historical Society. Phil had begun his interest in, and research on, local Orange, California history in High School. He had just graduated, and I was just back from my first year of graduate school. Since both of us were native Californians and Orange Countians, interested in our local history, we bonded quickly.

As the years passed, we stayed close friends. I moved with my jobs, while Phil stayed centered in Orange County. Starting with *The Plaza*, Phil's second book, (his first was a history of the Lost Valley Scout Reservation he published in 1978) he followed in the footsteps of a heritage of great Orange County historians, from Sam Armor and Terry Stephenson to Don Meadows and Jim Sleeper. Phil reached out while in High School to interview Don Meadows about his school, which Don had also attended. Don saw in Phil someone to be mentored, and did, becoming a friend as well, for the rest of his life. Jim Sleeper also became a close friend and mentor, seeing Phil's work as a worthy successor to his in the presentation of Orange County history.

And present it he did. Phil was a virtual machine when it came to writing. Books such as *Orange, The City Round the Plaza* (you never wanted to say the circle around Phil); *Old Orange County Courthouse*; *A Brief History of Orange, California*; *Orange County Chronicles*; *Orange County Place Names A to Z* (the only time when he expanded on an earlier work, this one by his early mentor Don Meadows on the same subject); *A Place Called Home*, and more than a dozen others, including an edited volume of Jim Sleeper's local history talks, showed Phil's devotion to his home and its history. He brought back the Orange County Historical Society's *Orange Countiana* annual publication, serving as editor and keeping it going for years. He also embraced new forms of writing, reaching out through his web presence. He was a local historian, as he always said in no uncertain terms. He believed that to truly understand an area and write about it, you had to walk the land, know the people, and recognize any name mentioned in a letter or newspaper article. And that Phil did.

But along the way, Phil had also become a renowned authority on not only the Ramona story, but also the Ramona Pageant, an outdoor play given each year in Hemet, California, where he lived and served as the pageant historian for a number of years, both paid and unpaid. He also was the San Jacinto, California, museum director for a few years, another town which plays a role in the Ramona story. Despite living there, so close to Temecula, which is also a part of the story and a town that he wrote books about (and edited the revived High Country magazine for years), it was not Orange County. He also became well-known for his expertise on the Butterfield Overland Route, and the Borrego Valley. He participated in the Pegleg Smith Liar's Contest for many years, eventually winning the contest in abstentia, and being made Master of Ceremonies so others would have a chance.

Eventually, he had to come home, and he did when he became the Orange County Archivist in 2003, when the position was recreated. He served in that role for five years.



However, a short segue is in order here, because I have not noted Phil's interest in Death Valley. He became very interested in the newspapers of the region, as well as the mining history. Hiking the desert with his many friends, often, especially when younger, going into abandoned mines before they were closed for safety reasons, he started looking into that history as well. He wrote for the Death Valley '49ers, being invited to their authors' breakfasts. Focusing on the Death Valley Chuckwalla, he tracked down, as was his want, the son of one of the editors, and interviewed him about his father and his work. He also

became very interested in Randall Henderson and the Desert Magazine, and became friends with Randall's daughter, Evonne Riddell. Phil, in typical fashion as anyone who knew him would tell you, introduced me to Evonne when I took my current job in 1993 to create an aviation museum at McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas. I told Phil that Randall Henderson was the first man to fly to Las Vegas in 1920, and he promptly gave me Henderson's daughter's phone number so I could contact her. Phil later wrote *Barnstorming the Desert*, a book about Henderson's aviation career, for my museum to publish.

Phil's latest "local" history efforts had been focused with his friend Eric Plunkett on the Portola Expedition and its impact on California, as well as beginning work on a new Indian Agents book with Valerie Mathis. He and I had brought out a couple of books this last year, including the latest Plaque Book from *E Clampus Vitus*, where Phil served as the cyberplaquero to my role as Grand Plaquero. He was updating his history of scouting in Orange County, and working on a few other projects as well. A fairly typical pace for Phil, who published over 30 books in his too short 60 years. He also served as *Branding Iron* editor for three years for the Los Angeles Corral.

Yes, Phil was a local historian. But local was both a place and a style, a way of understanding history. He always wanted to understand history as being about people. Whatever you might want to say about the grand sweep of history, it always came down to the individuals in Phil's world. And he cared about them, both in his writing and when he worked with them.

Phil also cared for other historians and those coming up. He never felt he "owned" the history he had researched. It was there for others to use as well. If you had a question, you could call him, and he would answer the phone and talk to you. My son, a PhD candidate in history, would call him to discuss obscure points in southwest history, and Phil never minded. Phil was in the cell phone rolodexes of most local reporters and historians. And if you wanted to know where to look for information, he was a walking search engine (though he would have preferred encyclopedia, probably).

Phil will be missed greatly. While his written heritage will live on, and many of his works will continue to be the basic works on the subject, the loss of his knowledge will ripple outward through the many books and articles which will not be written, the talks and tours which will not be given, and the phone calls which will not be answered. He was a fine historian, and one that made a difference. The void is great, and will come up every time we think, *Oh wait, let me call Phil...*

— Mark Hall-Patton



### Charles Hagemester, 1931 - 2019



Fort Collins, Colorado - Charles (Chuck) William Hagemester was born on December 7, 1931 in Fort Collins, Colorado and passed away on December 25, 2019.

Chuck married the love of his life Pearl on June 25, 1988 and they shared their blessed life together for over 31 years.

He was a native of Fort Collins from a prominent pioneer family. Having lived here for 88 years, he had deep roots in the city. His Grandfather was known as the father of the sheep feeding industry in this area and was involved in oil and gas drilling in north Fort Collins.

Chuck was a member and past Sheriff of the Fort Collins Corral of Westerners International.

In 1950 Charles graduated from Fort Collins High School. After attending Colorado State University, then known as Colorado A&M, for one quarter, Chuck left to serve his country in the Korean War. He was sent to Biloxi, MS with his Air National Guard Unit and was trained as a radar operator. During activation as part of the Air Force, Chuck was released due to an old back injury. He returned to Fort Collins, joining the Fort Collins Police Department as a patrolman and resigned as a Detective Sergeant in 1962 to complete his degree at Colorado A&M. He then went on to earn a BS in Social Studies, Guidance Counseling, and later an Administration Certificate from Colorado State University. After graduation, Chuck served as a teacher, counselor, and assistant principal for 23 years. He was also an exchange teacher and chairperson for the reading program at Kamehameha Schools Honolulu, HI. He also served as president of the Poudre Education Association and Phi Kappa Delta, an honorary education society.

Chuck then worked as a Juvenile Investigator for 12 years for the Larimer County District Attorney's Office, retiring in 2000. Chuck's numerous civic activities included chairman of the Fort Collins Discovery Center Advisory Council, founder of the Fort Collins Historical Society, served as the History Committee Chairman of the Fort Collins Centennial Bi-Centennial in 1976, life member of the Elks Lodge #804, member and past vice-president of the Fort Collins Municipal Railway Society, and he most recently was presented a beautiful plaque honoring him as a dear friend and founding member of the Northern Colorado Model Railroad Club. Chuck and his wife Pearl were active members of First Presbyterian Church, having served as ushers and greeters over the years.

## Doug Hocking, Cochise County Corral Honored

In 2019, Ranch Hand, **Doug Hocking, of the WI Cochise County Corral** was honored with the Will Rogers Medallion (silver) for his book *Black Legend: George Bascom, Cochise and the Start of the Apache Wars*. The book is a study of the early years of U.S. possession of the Gadsden Purchase and of the causes of the first Chiricahua war. The study challenges the portrayal of Lieutenant Bascom as a hard-headed villain by returning to the primary sources. *Black Legend* was also honored as a finalist in the New Mexico-Arizona Book Awards. Hocking's next book, *Terror on the Santa Fe Trail: Kit Carson and the Jicarilla Apache* looks at the war of the Jicarilla Apache who closed the Santa Fe Trail three times and at their complicated relationship with Kit Carson. Doug will be signing books at the Tucson Festival of Books in March at the booth Amigos and Ladies of the West.





*Jim Jennings grew up in Sweetwater, Texas and graduated from Texas A&M University. Jim and his wife Mavis reside in Amarillo, Texas. He is a member of the Palo Duro Corral and serves the Corral as Keeper of the Chips. Jim is a renowned western writer and a long-time western historian. Jim is retired as Executive Director of Publications for the American Quarter Horse Association and continues to write and is currently writing the scripts for Red Steagall's television show "Somewhere West of Wall Street."*

# The Duke of the Big Screen

*by Jim Jennings, Palo Duro Corral*

Marion Robert Morrison was born in Winterset, Iowa, on May 26, 1907. So, why is that important to a group of Westerners? Marion's name was changed to John Wayne a few years later, and in my opinion, John Wayne just might be the greatest western actor of all time.

But it was a number of years before Marion became John Wayne. While the Morrison family lived in Winterset, Marion's father, Clyde, worked as a pharmacist. However, in 1914, when Marion was 7 years old, Clyde developed a lung condition. Searching for a warmer, drier climate, Clyde moved his family to Palmdale, California, where they tried ranching in the Mojave Desert. Two years later, when the ranch failed, Marion and his family moved to Glendale, California, and Clyde resumed work as a pharmacist.

In Glendale, Marion delivered medicines for his father, sold newspapers and attended Wilson Middle School. That's when he acquired another name that would stick with him throughout his life. A local fireman at the station on his paper route started calling him Little Duke because he never went anywhere without his huge Airedale Terrier, which he called Duke. Not surprisingly, the youngster preferred Duke to Marion, and the name stuck.

Duke attended Glendale High School, where he played football and was on the 1924 league champion team. But he also excelled in academics. He was on the high school debating team, president of the Latin Society and he wrote articles for the sports page of the high school newspaper. When he graduated, he enrolled at the University of Southern California with a football scholarship, majoring in pre-law. However, he broke his collar bone in a body surfing accident, which ended his athletic scholarship as well as his college career because he couldn't afford to go to college without the scholarship. Then, knowing the young man needed a job, USC football coach Howard Jones, who was a friend of silent film star Tom Mix, convinced Mix and director John Ford to hire Duke as a member of the swing gang at Fox Film Corporation. He became a prop man, moving furniture and whatever else kind of equipment needed for the filmmakers.

After a while, some of the film directors noticed the young man around the movie sets and gave him jobs as an extra – principally because of his build – as a football player in the movies "Brown of Harvard" in 1926 and "Drop Kick" in 1927. Then John Ford gave him a job herding geese in the 1928 film "Mother Machree." Ford continued to use Duke as an extra in his movies, and, at the same time, the young actor tried to learn as much as he could from Ford about film making. Over time, the two became good friends and Ford introduced him to



director Raoul Walsh, who gave Duke his first starring role, as the cowboy Breck Coleman in the 1930 film "The Big Trail." Previously, while working for Fox in bit roles, Duke was given on-screen credit as Duke Morrison only once. Walsh suggested he change his name to John Wayne to make him an easier sell to film audiences. It was alright with Duke if the people paying his salary wanted to spruce up his name. His pay was raised to \$105 a week.

Throughout the 1930s, Duke was relegated to small roles in minor pictures, primarily because of the commercial failure of "The Big Trail." He later estimated that he appeared in about 80 low budget westerns during that period. However, he used the time to work with stuntmen and real cowboys so that they could teach him the skills necessary to play a realistic cowboy on screen. Stuntman Yakima Canutt and Duke developed and perfected stunts and on-screen fight techniques that are still in use today. Then, in 1939, John Ford gave him his big break as the Ringo Kid in the classic film "Stagecoach." "Stagecoach" was a huge critical and financial success. Duke's performance made him a star and it earned Ford an Academy Award nomination for best director.

Duke's first color film was "Shepherd of the Hills," which was filmed in 1941 and co-starred his longtime friend Harry Carey. The next year he appeared in his only film directed by Cecil B. DeMille, which was the technicolor epic "Reap the Wild Wind." He co-starred with Ray Milland and Paulette. Neither of those two movies were westerns. (continued)

Duke was exempted from service during World War II due to his age – he was 34 when Pearl Harbor was bombed – and because of his family status. He was married with four children at the time. But he toured the world and entertained troops for the USO. He toured U.S. bases and hospitals in the South Pacific for three months in 1943 and 1944. But he also made movies during the war – a lot of them – including “Flying Tigers,” which was filmed in 1942, and “They Were Expendable,” which was filmed in 1945 and received two Oscar nominations. Following the war, he made a number of movies about the conflict, but his rise as being the quintessential movie war hero began to take shape four years after World War II, when “Sands of Iwo Jima” was released. His footprints at Grauman’s Chinese Theater in Hollywood were laid in concrete that contained sand from Iwo Jima. When Japanese Emperor Hirohito visited the United States in 1975, he asked to meet John Wayne, even though he was a symbol of his country’s former enemy. But even before that, when Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev visited the United States in 1959, he made two requests: to visit Disneyland and meet John Wayne.

He appeared in nearly two dozen of John Ford’s films over 20 years, including the cavalry trilogy – “Fort Apache” in 1948, “She Wore a Yellow Ribbon,” in 1949 and “Rio Grande” in 1950. He and Ford also did “The Quiet Man” in 1952, “The Wings of Eagles” in 1957 and, in 1962, “The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance,” which co-starred James Stewart. Ford’s “The Searchers,” which was filmed in 1956, is considered by many people to be Duke’s finest film. He named his youngest son Ethan after the character he played in that movie.

Duke directed only two films in his career. The first was in 1960, “The Alamo,” for which he received an Oscar nomination for Best Picture. He produced, directed and starred in the movie. The other was “The Green Berets,” in which he also starred as well as directed. That movie was filmed in 1968 and was the only major film made during the Vietnam War to support the war.

In 1969, Duke received an Oscar for best actor for his role as the one-eyed Rooster Cogburn in “True Grit.” This was 20 years after his only other nomination, for his role in “The Sands of Iwo Jima.”

In 1972, Duke starred in “The Cowboys,” which featured him as a rancher forced to use a bunch of school boys as drovers to get his cattle to market. Among the boys was a 9-year-old named Clay O’Brien. According to the story I heard, Duke thought Clay was too young and too small to play the part – until Clay roped him. Clay and Duke became friends, but young Clay gave up acting for rodeo. He became Clay O’Brien Cooper, who, up to now, has earned seven world championships in team roping. Clay, however, has not confirmed to me the story about him roping Duke.

In 1964, Duke became a partner in the 50,000-acre 26 Bar Ranch near Eager, Arizona, where he raised registered Herefords. Duke often visited the ranch, and he was regularly seen at bull sales, buying replacement stock. He also bought a good many horses for use on the ranch. Duke and his partners maintained ownership of the ranch until his death.



Over the years, Duke had a number of health problems. In 1964, he developed lung cancer and had his left lung removed. In 1978, he had heart valve replacement surgery and in 1979 he had stomach cancer, from which he ultimately died. His final movie, filmed in 1976, was “The Shootist,” in which Duke played a gunfighter dying of cancer. It is considered to be one of his best.

Between 1926 and 1976, Duke appeared in more than 170 films and became one of America’s biggest box office stars. Only Clark Gable sold more tickets than him. Duke’s status as an iconic American was formally recognized by the U.S. government with the two highest civilian decorations: In 1979, he was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal and he was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1980 by President Jimmy Carter.

Duke died on June 11, 1979, at the age of 72. His dying wish was that his family use his name and likeness to help fight cancer. That wish led to the creation of the John Wayne Cancer Foundation in 1985. Through the years, that foundation has supported research by funding the creation of the Cancer Institute that bears his name, as well as education programs, awareness programs and various support groups.

On May 26, 2007, which would have been Duke’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, a celebration was held in Winterset at his birthplace. More than 30 of his family members attended, and ground was broken next door to the home for the John Wayne Birthplace Museum. The museum houses the largest exhibit of John Wayne artifacts in existence, including original movie posters, film wardrobe, scripts, contracts, letters, artwork and sculpture, and even one of his last customized automobiles. And, of course, there is a movie theater where visitors can watch a documentary on Duke’s film career.

And as for me, anytime one of his westerns comes on television, I watch it, even though I’ve seen them all a number of times.



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# Upcoming Events at the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum, Canyon, Texas



West Texas A&M University



CENTER FOR THE STUDY  
OF THE AMERICAN WEST

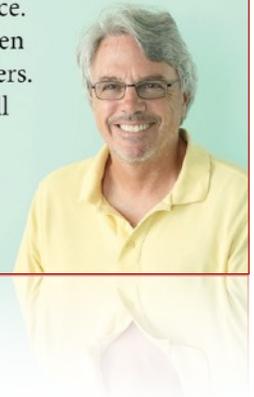


The Home Ranch is proud of its affiliation with the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum in Canyon, Texas. PPHM is the largest historical museum in Texas. For current and upcoming exhibitions, lectures, and special events please check the museum's web page at: <http://www.panhandleplains.org>



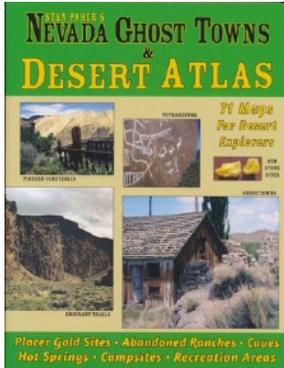
"The PPHM is my single favorite museum and has been a huge source of inspiration to me as a historian. Touring it is an amazing learning experience. For almost 20 years now I have been recommending the place to travelers. You can do whatever you like, I tell them, but don't miss the PPHM!"

- S. C. Gwynne



# BOOK & PUBLICATION NEWS

## OF INTEREST TO WESTERNERS



Nevada Ghost Towns & Desert Atlas (10th, Revised, Edition) by Stan Paher, photos by Nell Murbarger, maps by Paul Cirac, Nevada Publications, Reno, NV. Hardbound with dust jacket, 208 pages, 71 full-color maps, 530 photographic illustrations: \$39.95. Paperback edition \$32.50.

When the world was young, long before the arrival of Hippies, Yuppies, and Millennials, there were Hot-Rodders. During the Eisenhower and Kennedy years the Hot-Rodder's Mecca was Nevada. From all over the American West we came to the Silver State to see what our souped-up, low-buck, vehicles "could do." Nevada was our promised land: no speed limit, limitless stretches of two-lane blacktop through beautiful desert flatlands, few residents, and no cops with their ticket books out. And when not tearing up the road, we weren't gambling, since all of what little money we teenaged speed demons had went for Offenhouser and Iskanderian speed parts. So instead of hitting the slots, sixty years ago we poked around old, abandoned, mines and sagebrush-strewn ghost towns during the day and slept out under the stars at night, next to our Studebaker Golden Hawks and '29 Roadsters on '32 rails.

Nevada remains full of these silent sentinels of the recent past (no, not cars—ghost towns) and you can still visit them free of charge. The best way to find these lingering remnants of get-rich-quick settlements that bloomed then so rapidly died in the late 19th and early 20th century is by opening Stan Paher's Nevada Ghost Towns and Desert Atlas. Los Angeles Corral member and proud Nevada resident Paher's venerable book is the indispensable guide both for the tenderfoot exploring Nevada's scenic and historic riches for the very first time or the grizzled septuagenarian revisiting the triumphal locations of his now-distant youth. The full-color maps by Paul Cirac cannot be improved upon, and set the standard for all such interpretive cartographic renderings. Each map shows improved roads, 4WD-accessible dirt tracks, and the precise locations of the historic attractions more fully described in the accompanying text and photographs. Coverage does not stop at the state line, but spills over just enough into eastern California and western Arizona to leave no explorer "high and dry." A useful "travel and desert safety hints" section follows the descriptive text; this should be read by all who do not already consider themselves bona fide desert rats long before they head for the sand and sagebrush.

Today, when aging hot-rodgers get too claustrophobic in Phoenix, San José, or Los Angeles, we still head for the wide-open spaces of Nevada, and we take Paher's essential book with us. Most of us now drive a little slower, in vehicles with much higher clearance than our old road-rockets had, and we stop much more often to poke around our old friends, the abandoned mines and mining towns sprinkled across the length and breadth of Nevada. And, for those folk who live in those little states east of the Big Muddy, too far away to easily get to the Silver State, Paher's most recent (10th edition) of his classic Nevada Ghost Towns and Desert Atlas is the next best thing to actually being there. Its hundreds of wonderful photographs by Nell Murbarger (1909-1991), the pre-eminent documentary photographer of old Nevada, bring each ghost town to life. The maps alone are worth the very reasonable purchase price of this encyclopedic work. Don't head for the Silver State without it! Highly recommended.

Reviewed by Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D.

Emigrant Trails: The Long Road to California. A History and Guide to the Emigrant Routes from Central Nevada to the Crossing of the Sierra, with The End of the Trail for the Donner Party (3rd Revised Edition) by Marshall Fey, Stanley W. Paher, Jack Lepisto and Sam Toll, Nevada Publications, Reno, NV. 224 pages, maps, color illustrations, black and white historic photographs, bibliography, index. Hardbound \$29.95, Softbound \$19.95.

Some of the most compelling American literature are the "trail diaries" of the Forty-Niners and their many fewer predecessors, detailing their daily travails as they headed overland to California. Some Argonauts made their westwards trek with few problems, others got lost or were even misdirected, while still others perished and were buried by the side of the trail. Their hand-written accounts continue to be rediscovered year after year in musty attics or subterranean archives. These are published as new additions to the ever-growing list of eyewitness accounts of how the "Old West" used to be long before interstates, motels, and fast-food chains profaned its landscapes. Fortunately, most stretches of the trails that these emigrants traveled still remain far from modern settlements and populated areas. The old wagon ruts can occasionally be found in near-pristine condition, as can the lonely cairns covering the bodies of those emigrants who died chasing their dreams before they ever reached the promised land of California.

One of the most rewarding activities that any amateur or professional historian can undertake is to retrace the routes these emigrants took, always, of course, taking care to avoid disturbing the physical evidence for them. The essential guide to such peregrinations is Marshall Fey's Emigrant Trails: The Long Road to California. This wonderful book maps out the routes cutting across the southern Great Basin towards the daunting barrier of the Sierra Nevada, cataloging historical monuments and permanent trail markers along the way.

# BOOK & PUBLICATION NEWS

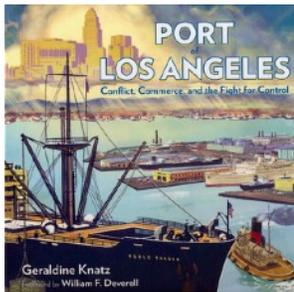
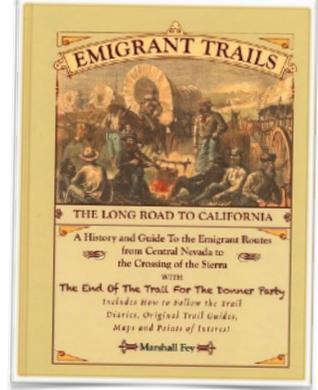
## OF INTEREST TO WESTERNERS



Interspersed with its very precise maps and locational photographs are historical vignettes taken from contemporary trail diaries, newspapers, and other sources: these bring the "trail experience" of 150+ years ago back to life in sharp detail. The third, revised, edition of Fey's classic *Emigrant Trails* concentrates on four main pathways: The Humboldt River Route; The Truckee River Route; The Carson River Route; and the Johnson Pass Route. A useful introductory section sets the scene for these westward migrations, and a comprehensive bibliography helps neophyte trail buffs to broaden their historical horizons with many first-person eyewitness accounts and later interpretive analyses.

For nearly a hundred years concerned individuals have done their best to direct modern roads and other potentially destructive developments away from the fragile traces of trails dating as early as the 1840s. More recently, Marshall Fey and his friends and associates of the Nevada Emigrant Trail Marking Committee (NETMC), organized in 1967, became the very first conservation-oriented group to actively protect many stretches of these emigrant trails. They did so by posting the now-familiar "T" markers of railroad track sections with permanent inscriptions attached. During more than fifty years of altruistic, protective work, NETMC has placed more than 600 trail markers in Nevada, Oregon, and Idaho.

The Silver State still has the wide-open spaces that used to be so common throughout the west. In fact, by almost any yardstick, Nevada only boasts two true cities, both of them commanding ever-growing suburban sprawls, Reno to the north, and Las Vegas to the south. Fortunately, most of the rest of the state remains thinly-populated, and still offers sanctuary for distressed urbanites from all points of the compass seeking solitude. And what better way to commune with nature, away from the teeming fleshpots of the modern world, than by retracing the steps of those hardy pioneers that rode, but almost as often walked, across an entire continent. No present-day historian of the California Gold Rush can say their education is truly complete until they have walked at least one of the old emigrant trails, and re-lived the experiences of those who headed westward four or five generations ago. Highly recommended. Reviewed by Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D.



Port of Los Angeles: Conflict, Commerce, and the Fight for Control, by Geraldine Knatz, foreword by William F. Deverell. Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West, Angel City Press, Los Angeles, CA. Hardbound, 320 pages, 200+ illustrations, appendices, end notes, bibliography, index: \$45.00

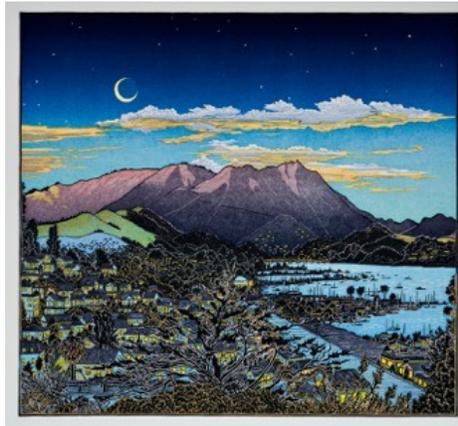
Too many present-day residents of California think only in terrestrial terms when considering the history of their state. They often forget the rich maritime influences from all over the world that helped make first San Francisco, and then Los Angeles, the dominant cities of the American Pacific Coast. But, as those of us as much at home on salt water as we may be in the mountains, the forests, and the deserts of the American West like to say, history doesn't, and never has, stopped at the waterline. Dr. Geraldine Knatz became the Executive Director of the Port of Los Angeles in 2006 and ran it for many years. Nobody could be better qualified to write the definitive book about the most active American port on the Pacific Coast than she.

Port of Los Angeles: Conflict, Commerce, and the Fight for Control is many different books in one. It is written from an informed perspective treating geography, ecology, economics and politics as of equal importance bearing upon the unique story of the port. Best of all, every major change in the port's history is related to the people involved: visionaries, politicians, movers and shakers, businessmen, sailors, longshoremen, activists, the good and the not-so-good, the far-seeing and the myopic. Shining through page after page is Knatz' firm belief that people create their own history, for good or for ill, and are not simply swept along upon the tide of forces beyond their own control. Also unmistakable is her conviction that the form that the Port of Los Angeles took was not accidental, but the product of a great many decisions taken over a great many years. Some of these decisions were secret, others public; some were popular, others were bitterly contested, and have left a legacy of division. Dr. Knatz' book is chronologically divided into three sections, 1891-1913; 1914-1945; and 1946-1977. It is lavishly illustrated with a wonderful selection of historic photographs, maps, air photos, contemporary promotional artwork, political cartoons, and artists' renderings. Of particular interest to this reviewer were the sections showing how the military demands of both World Wars affected the Port of Los Angeles in unsuspected ways, and focused national attention upon it; the love-hate relationship between

(continued)

the port and local and national railroads, the two completely different functional entities often in competition with each other, but those in charge of both never able to afford to ignore each other; and last, but certainly not least, Knatz' masterful retelling of the now-forgotten influence the completion of the Panama Canal had on all American ports ("Canal Fever"), not just that of Los Angeles. Dr. Knatz is a member of the Los Angeles Corral of the Westerners, as is her husband and her son. She has contributed scholarly studies on Southern California history as both corral and mainstream publications over the years. Her most recent (2019) offering, on the Port of Los Angeles, is destined to become a classic. Anybody with an interest in maritime history, in the history of shipping and international commerce, in the relationship between coastal cities and the ports that serve them, and in California and Western American history in general will find this book of great interest. For years to come it will be recommended reading in university courses on history, economics, and politics, and will be found in public libraries everywhere. It is a must read for anybody proud to live on the edge of the World's greatest ocean. A magnificent accomplishment, and highly recommended.

Reviewed by **Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D.**



**Coming Soon, Summer 2020!**

## **Brand Book 24, Los Angeles Corral of the Westerners**

### ***ALOHA, AMIGOS!***

#### **The Richard H. Dillon Memorial Volume**

**Brian Dervin Dillon, Editor**

**Richard H. Dillon** (1924-2016) was a world-famous western historian, librarian, teacher and public speaker. First published at age 10, he was the author of dozens of prize-winning full-length books, hundreds of articles, and thousands of book reviews. A 4<sup>th</sup> generation Californian and WWII WIA combat veteran, Dick Dillon was a member of the Los Angeles and the San Francisco Corrals. He presented scholarly lectures to every corral in California, Chicago, on the American East Coast, even in England. He also published articles and book reviews in Westerners International Brand Books and quarterly newsletters coast-to-coast. Richard H. Dillon (RHD) was made Westerners International Living Legend No. 46 in 2003.

**Brand Book 24 of the Los Angeles Corral** takes its title from Dick Dillon's favorite sign-off from hundreds of letters and thousands of postcards sent to fellow Westerners over 70+ years. *Aloha Amigos* incorporates a biography of RHD, culture-historical studies and paeans by his friends and admirers, and a bibliography of his published works. Contributors from four different WI corrals include Will Bagley, Peter Blodgett, John Boessenecker, Matthew Boxt, Phil Brigandi, Robert Chandler, David Dary, James Delgado, Brian Dervin Dillon, Lynn Downey, Abraham Hoffman, Gary Kurutz, Valerie Sherer Mathes, James Shuttleworth, and Francis J. Weber. Foreword by Kevin Starr, cover art by Tommy Killion.

Contact BB 24 Editor Brian ([briandervindillon@gmail.com](mailto:briandervindillon@gmail.com)) for more information.