

# BOSQUE

## LETTER

February 2012

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### **In Memoriam**

#### **J. R. Bob Allen**

Bob Allen passed away November 27, 2011, at the age of 81. He and his wife B.J. retired to Valley Mills in 1984 after a career with John Deere that took them all over the globe. Bob and B.J. became very active in Valley Mills: Bob formed the Valley Mills EMS, and served as first president of the Valley Mills Development Association. He and B.J. were early supporters of the Bosque County Collection, giving not only their time but guidance and experience. Bob and B.J. have served as members of the Bosque County Historical Commission for many years. He was also active in Boy Scouts, the Lions Club, Bosque Valley Heritage Society, First United Methodist Church and the Valley Mills Cemetery Committee. Mr. Allen is survived by his wife and son, James Lee Allen. Memorials can be made to Valley Mills Cemetery Association, PO Box 253, Valley Mills TX 76689.

Bob's mother was Mary Lewis, a direct descendant of Lowry H. Scrutchfield. Mr. Scrutchfield was a Texas Ranger serving with George Erath when Bosque Valley was surveyed. He and Erath had a very close relationship, Mr. Erath treated Scrutchfield as his own son. Scrutchfield settled on his half-brothers survey, the John C. Pool tract located between Clifton and Valley Mills. He was at the forefront of the Bosque Territory becoming a county and served as the first county judge.

#### **Clarence D. Handley, Jr**

C.D. Handley was born in Clifton on July 10, 1920, the son of Clarence and Thelma Handley. He graduated from Clifton and then attended Clifton College and Trinity College. In 1942 he married Nell Walker, and then joined the Navy. After his discharge he obtained a degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Texas. He retired from the Texas Highway Department in 1984.

Mr. Handley was a Mason, a Shriner, an Elk and a member of the American Legion and the VFW. He also was an honorary member of the Bosque County Historical Commission.

## **Spinning Wheel**

The Collection got a wonderful surprise recently. It's a spinning wheel constructed by Ole Nystel and it was presented to his bride on their wedding day. A very gracious thank you goes to the family members who donated this wonderful piece of pioneer history, and especially to Chris Carter who sent the wheel all the way from Iowa. Chris will be sending more information on the wheel at a later time. Please come and see this spinning wheel, which will be featured in a display on Bosque County Pioneer Women. Collection hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

## **Bosque County Celebrates Texas Independence Week – 2012**

In June 2008 a group of interested Texans began a project to celebrate Texas Independence. The purpose is to encourage and promote education regarding the rich history of Texas and its people and to celebrate our past and honor those who paved the way for us. Bosque County has been a large participant of this celebration starting in March 2009. Week long programs are held all over the county, focusing on everything from Indian troubles to Texas Rangers to outlaws and local community folk lore and history. The goal is to involve all communities and schools in educational programs and to share the Texas experience. Civic organizations, churches and schools have been very supportive. These celebrations should help us grow in knowledge and appreciation for the past. Programs involving students focus mainly on the fourth and seventh grade, since those are the grades that study Texas History. Fourth graders are invited to enter an art contest, featuring a famous place or person. Seventh graders write an essay about Texas history. The best entries are voted on by the students in those grades, and the finalists are judged by a panel. This year's winners will be announced on March 7 at the Walnut Springs School Auditorium at 1:30 pm. Mr. T. L. Thompson from Iredell will be the speaker for the awards ceremony.

### **The calendar of events for the celebration is as follows:**

February 25, Saturday at 7:00 pm in the Walnut Springs School Auditorium the Walnut Springs Historical Association presents an original play, complete with music called "Get Aboard, Texas Central". The play is written and directed by Bryan Sowell, who also wrote the musical score, and features historical vignettes set in a general store circa 1895. The play is free to the public.

March 1, Thursday from 4:00-6:00 pm at Knox Hall behind the Texas Ranger Museum in Waco members of the Sterling C. Robertson Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas will present a program featuring Mike Cox, author of 20 non-fiction books and winner of the A.C. Greene Award for Lifetime Achievement. Also Bosque County Poet Laureate Sherrod Fielden will recite poetry.

March 2, Friday Texas Independence Day at 11:00 am at the Valley Mills Cemetery the Bosque Valley Heritage Society and Sterling C. Robertson Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas will host a memorial service for Republic soldiers Roden T Crane and Jonathan McFadden. Elizabeth Torrence and Emily Bailey will be recognized.

At 6:00 pm on Texas Independence Day in the District Courtroom the Bosque Collection will host a program "Meridian 1878: Deadly Climax of the Horrell-Higgins Feud," presented by award-winning Texas historian Bill O'Neal. Afterward a reception will be held at the Bosque Collection, where the speaker will be available to sign books.

March 4, Sunday at 2:00 pm the Bosque Memorial Museum will sponsor Johnson County attorney Charles Lummus, who has studied Phillip Nolan for over twenty years. He will share his insights on this interesting part of early Texas history.

Note: I stumbled upon this on microfilm one day, and I think it's great.

This proclamation was published in the February 1936 issue of the Meridian Tribune. 1936 Texans celebrated the centennial of Texas Independence, but the words ring true for today:

Whereas, the State of Texas is an empire within itself, vast in its area, unparalled in the glory of its heroic deeds and romantic history, unrivaled in the splendid progress and achievements of its brilliant past and living present, and unmatched in the marvelous opportunities it has in store for its citizens ever in the future; and

Whereas, we are approaching the date, March 2, which marks the birth of Texas Liberty and the beginning of the Republic of Texas, and its subsequent entry into the Sisterhood of States of this Union; and

Whereas, there is a movement throughout this State that Texas Week, beginning March 1 and closing March 7 be properly observed in commemoration of the birth of the Republic of Texas;

Now, Therefore, I, J.D. Grimes, Mayor of the City of Meridian, in accordance with Senate Concurrent Resolution No.8 of the Forty-Second Legislature, proclaim Texas Week and invite our citizens to observe Texas Week, not as a season of holidays but as a week of better work and better living;

First. I urge every home, office, place of business and industry, and the public school to fly a Texas Flag.

Second. I urge the school to observe Texas Week with appropriate assembly programs; make Texas Week education week and book week; plant trees and flowers and dedicate them; and make patriotic pilgrimages to places of historical significance; and

Third. I urge clubs, churches, lodges and other assemblies to render appropriate programs during Texas Week;

Fourth. Let us all, for a brief space of Texas Week extol the cultural and spiritual values of the romantic traditions of our history and dedicate ourselves to the lofty ideals of statesmanship, character and leadership which our forefathers exhibited in their lives consecrated to liberty, happiness and service. Signed by J.D.Grimes, Mayor and Levi Dunlap, City Secretary

## **The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Preservation Luncheon**

The Bosque County Historical Commission will hold their annual Preservation Luncheon on Saturday, March 10, 2012, 12:00 noon at the Clifton Civic Center. Every year the Commission recognizes and honors a prominent historic feature of the county. This year's honoree is Louis A. Beecherl, Jr. The luncheon is dedicated to Miss Elizabeth Torrence.

Flat Top Ranch is an agricultural icon in the cattle breeding and ranchland management world, and the man behind the business for nearly 25 years will be the focus of the 2012 luncheon. The Flat Top Ranch near Walnut Springs began operation in 1938 and became known world-wide as a prominent breeders of the Horned Hereford cattle. Many historic characters are connected to this ranch including Nathan Daniels, William Harrison McCurdy, and Captain Jack Cureton.

In 1986 Mr. Beecherl purchased the ranch from Charles Petit. He was a quiet, unassuming philanthropist and business man from Dallas finally made his dream come true. Beecherl co-authored a book by that name, *A Dream Come True, The Story of Flat Top Ranch*, with Bryan Sowell, a retired school teacher and native of Walnut Springs.

Mr. Beecherl passed away in July 2011 in Dallas. He was a native of Dallas, graduated with degrees from Tulane University and the University of Texas. He served in the Navy at the end of WWII and then began a forty-year career in the energy business, and was active in many civic and philanthropic services. He is survived by his wife Julie Tutt Beecherl, who has roots in the Kimball area, three daughters, five sons, thirty-two grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Sowell will introduce the Beecherl family and give a brief history of the ranch and emphasize the influence that Beecherl has had not only with Flat Top but in the education and business world.

Tickets are on sale, in advance only, for \$10 per person, and may be purchased in person at the Collection between 8 am-5 pm (closed Noon), or by mail at PO Box 534, Meridian, 76665. Reservations can be made by calling 254-435-6182. The last day for reservations is March 8!

Doors open at 11:30 am; lunch at Noon. Wiethorn Catering Service of Valley Mills will cater the luncheon.

### **Donations:**

**Karen Austin-** family histories for Weehunt, Davis and Lechler families

**Ann Wiland-** three annuals that belonged to Helen Solberg-"Daedalian" 1937, 1939, 1940, from Texas State College for Women in Denton

**Corinne and Don Brock** - "Profiles of Courage, Bosque County Residents in Viet Nam" by Mike Burns. This book contains personal stories and interviews from the veterans, and is worth reading.

**Charles Ellis** - book of photos and brief history of homes in Morgan, including photos of the old depot and tracks and churches. I encourage others to follow Mr. Ellis' example and document your area.

**Carol Pryor-** a type-setting plate of the Meridian Tribune from March, 1977. These plates are from the last issue before the paper switched to off-set printing and they were sold as mementos.

**Etta Mae Bertelsen-** "A Walk With Grandma" a book of recollections and stories about Etta's grandmother Fannie Pendleton and her family, plus a beautiful family history book on the Pendleton family.

**First women to serve on a Bosque County Jury were Mrs. R.D. Holt and Mrs. Ottis Tyler on June 17, 1955. Mrs. Holt was the jury foreman.**

*The Lumpkin Building has been the home to the Collection ten years, 2001 to 2011! Our mission is still ongoing and thanks to all our members for their continued support!*



