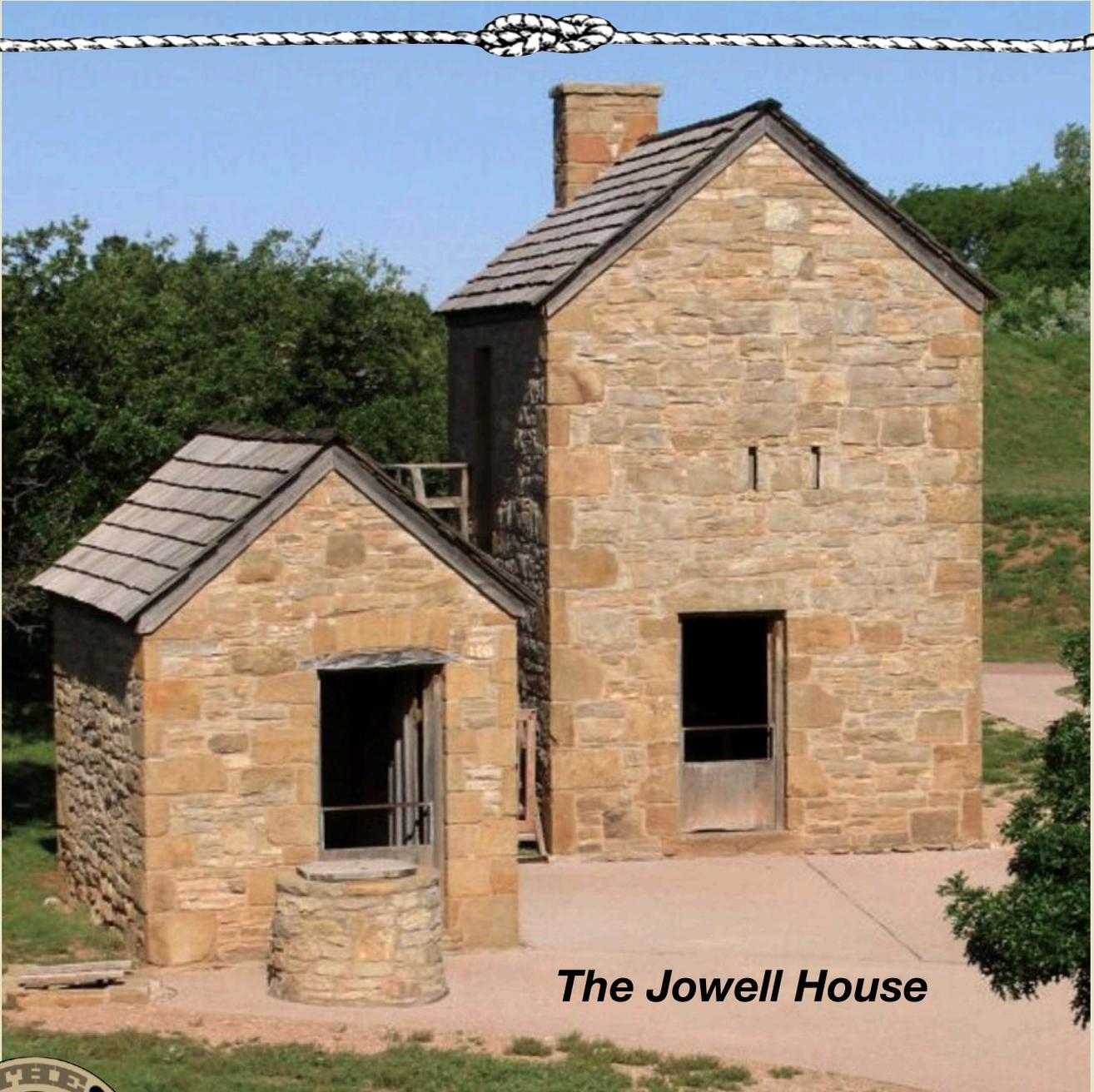


BUCKSKIN BULLETIN



The Jowell House



Photo and text reprinted courtesy of **The National Ranching Heritage Center**, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas. For more information on the center, check out: <https://ranchingheritage.org>

The Jowell House is located at **The National Ranching Heritage Center** on the campus of Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas. The NRHC moved 90 tons of hand-cut limestone and sandstone several hundred miles to reassemble the Jowell House as an example of a fortress home meant to protect a wilderness family from Indian attacks and other dangers.

More on the Jowell family story continued on page 3.



WI Chairman, Bonney MacDonald
Photo by Rik Anderson, WTAMU

CHAIRMAN'S GREETING

Greetings from the Home Ranch! Spring is springing all around. Green is showing up on what seemed like bare ground last month and what, for some, was snow-covered ground not too long ago! Delinda King, WI Secretary and Treasurer, Lisa Jackson, WI Assistant, and I continue to work onsite and remotely, and the WI calendar and seasonal activities continue.

We applaud all of you for creative programs and events this last year, not to mention the newsletters and publications many of you have been working on.

As you'll know, the awards season is upon us. Packets with dues info, contact info sheets, and awards entry forms are posted on the website early March. For those who do not access them there, I will send out email copies. Delinda King, WI Secretary and Treasurer and Lisa Jackson, WI Assistant, will send out hard copies for those who prefer them. The address is on the forms, and you'll have everything you need to send us your materials through the U.S. Mail.

Please note that, because corrals and posses generally elect officers in January, the Home Ranch may well not yet have your up-to-date contact information for officers. To address this issue, as we do each year, I will email awards entries to both the sheriffs and reps, to cover all bases. Please be sure and mail back your Contact Information forms so we can continue to be in touch in 2025. Once we have received most of your responses, we will take that new information and put it all on the website's contact information list.

Finally, we just want to be sure you have our current phone number. If you want to call the Home Ranch, dial 806-654-6920. It remains the same number as in the past few years, but we want to be sure you have it handy!

Finally – as always!! -- a special thanks goes out to Ken Pirtle, Buckskin Bulletin Editor, for formatting, producing, and editing yet another great issue of the Bulletin – full of good news on events and activities in our corrals and posses!

Happy Spring and Happy Trails!

Bonney

Bonney MacDonald
Chairman, Westerners International



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Leanna Jowell was home alone with her baby in 1872 when the horses began neighing and the cattle moved about restlessly. Feeling uneasy, she stepped outside to check on the animals.

Remembering her father who had been killed and scalped earlier in the year, Leanna shouted for the hired man to saddle their horses. She grabbed her baby, and the three of them rode fast and furiously to a neighbor's house.

Like many Texas ranchers coming home from the Civil War, Leanna's husband George Radcliffe Jowell was away on a cattle drive when his wife and baby were alone in the cabin. Long cattle drives away from home were an economic necessity for ranchers who returned from the war and found their cattle scattered or stolen. The now-feral cattle were the only resource and the markets were hundreds of miles away.

Many of the families that waited at home had to deal with Commanche and Kiowa who came to the house to steal horses and cattle. Sometimes the raiders took captives and often they killed.

George Jowell was four years old when his family reached Texas in the days of the Republic. He was 15 when they moved to Palo Pinto County in 1855. His father, James Jowell, served with Capt. Jack Hays' Texas Rangers during the Mexican War. George served with the 14th Texas Cavalry during the Civil War. His sister, Cynthia Ann Jowell, became the wife of Texas cattle baron C.C. Slaughter whose Long S cattle roamed a million acres.

According to a history of north and west Texas published in 1906, George Radcliffe Jowell was "a Texan of the purest water" who grew up with Texas and helped shape its cattle heritage. Before marriage, George Jowell was accustomed to joining other Palo Pinto residents in a stockade erected across the street from the courthouse for protection against Indian attacks. In 1870, he married Leanna T. Dobbs and moved to a site that he named Jowell Creek about 15 miles northwest of town. He built a log cabin and began his ranching career with long cattle drives to railheads. When

George returned home from a drive in 1872, he found his family safe but his cabin burned to the ground. As a result, George determined to build a fort-like stone home that the Indians couldn't burn.

The 1875 Jowell House in its original location in Palo Pinto County, Texas, showed evidence of deterioration not only from weather and age but also from vandalism. While he and his family lived with neighbors, George paid \$1,000 for a 494-acre tract of land on Sept. 16, 1874, to build his home and establish the JOLY Ranch on Bluff Creek, 16 miles northwest of Palo Pinto. George hired a stonemason to construct a two-story rock house on his new property at the southwest edge of Possum Kingdom Lake. Jowell used stone and cedar for construction and covered the interior walls with a plaster of lime, sand and horsehair. The limestone was probably quarried at Rock Creek, three-quarters of a mile northwest of the house. Sandstone was

substituted when craftsmanship was important. The fortress-like stone house was always called the JOLY ranch house because of the brand Jowell used.

The two-room house had rifle slits above the main door to protect a horse corral in front of the house. These openings were cut at an angle so an arrow could not enter the room during an attack. A trap door was cut in the second-story floor and a ladder kept nearby so the family could climb to the top floor. After the threat of Indian attacks had passed, the Jowell family added a wooden outer staircase to access the second floor.

George had no way of knowing there would be no further attacks on his family. By the time the house was finished, most Indians in the area had been sent to reservations. The family lived in the stone house until 1881 when George sold the property to I.W. Stephens who in turn sold it in 1889 to the firm that became Ewen, Small and Taylor, founders of the SET Ranch. In 1910 the property was sold to L.E. Seaman, a prominent rancher, banker and merchant in Mineral Wells, Texas.

The open range lured the Jowell family to Stonewall and Jones counties, and then the family moved to Deaf Smith County where they established the Lucky Hit Ranch. Jowell was the first county assessor of Deaf Smith County. Records show he was a founder of the city of Hereford and brought the first herd of registered Herefords to the county. After his wife died in 1898, he married Ella Lowe Coston in 1906 and moved to a plantation in Mexico where he died in 1912.

reprinted courtesy of the NRHC





REMINDER TO ALL SHERIFFS AND MEMBERS!

Sheriffs: Please remember to email 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 forward it by email 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.

2025 DUES and CONTACT INFO SHEETS: DUE May 1, 2025

At the Home Ranch we want to do all we can to support and encourage corrals and posses. A couple of sheriffs have reported that their membership declined this year. We understand! As was the case last year, we know you can only do so much. So for the corrals and posses that have continued on Zoom or in person, and find themselves able to send in dues, we thank you!

However, if your corral or posse is not in that position, you may send in 50% of the dues. And if that's not possible now, we will work with it! Our main concern is that we all stay healthy, meet as you can, and keep the Westerners spirit alive. Do what you can, and we'll support you in whatever way possible!

And please, even if you're not sending in dues yet, please return the contact information sheet by May 1 to the address indicated on the form. We need that information so we can send the Bulletin to the right place, and so we have current email and mailing information for your officers.

Thank you!!

WESTERNERS INTERNATIONAL AWARDS ENTRIES DUE MAY 15, 2025

Awards entry forms are sent out to Reps by email, along with the dues and contact info sheets. They can also be downloaded from the WI website. All award entries are due by May 15, 2025. 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! Maybe you've written an essay, book, or article, or maybe you've delivered a program – or even some poetry. Send in your work so we can brag on you!

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! All the information you need is on the forms, including mailing address.





Hear ye, Hear ye!

The 2025 Westerners International Gather will be held

THURSDAY, SEPT 18 - SATURDAY, SEPT 20
(With early registration available Wed afternoon, Sept 17)

**Hosted by Cal Larive, Sheriff, and members of the
Jedediah Smith Corral**

in beautiful

Hot Springs, South Dakota

So hitch up y'er wagons, git y'erself a mule or pony, and travel to South Dakota this fall!! You won't want to miss it! Cal is planning fascinating programs on Western history in the area, a trip to Mt. Rushmore and Deadwood with historical presentations, and a Saturday banquet complete with fun music. You won't want to miss the fellowship, learning, and fun! Watch the next Bulletin for registration details; registration will be available online as well as in downloadable forms that you can fill out and mail in!

Contact Cal Larive, Sheriff, Jedediah Smith Corral for questions/information. He's excited about planning the event and would be delighted to hear from you!

605-891-3144 or callarive@yahoo.com

Have a look at the Corral's website at: www.jscorral.com



CORRAL NEWS



Linda Mazur of the Huntington Corral reported that **Gary Frueholz** presented a program on "Ghosts of the San Gabriel Valley." Gary is very active in the local Alhambra community, a longtime member of the Tournament of Roses, and a lover of local history. He shared stories about places of lore, legend, and memory. In March the Corral hosted Ed Anderson, who presented on "Adams Pack Station and the Old Camps of the San Gabriels." In 1889, an ambitious young Pasadena restaurateur named Peter Steil established a tent camp near Wilson's Peak on the front range of the San Gabriel Mountains. It was a time of heightened interest in the local mountains, and Steil seized the opportunity to popularize his rustic camp for tourists.

The Ft. Worth Westerners had a program in January from Corral member **David Beyreis** and, in February hosted a Zoom Program from **James E. Brasher**, entitled "Eleven Days on the Colorado: The Pivotal Battle Unfought." The Corral's March program was presented by **Dr. Michelle M. Martin** and was entitled "All the Sorrows of the World: Hannah Worcester Hicks & the Civil War in the Cherokee Nation"

In January the **Kansas City Westerners** hosted **Mark Kelly**, who discussed his new book about "Andrew Henry, The Myth ... The Man." Andrew Henry was a Missourian, well known for his exploits up the Missouri River in 1809-1811 and again with William H. Ashley from April 1822 to August 1824. **The KC Westerners** had to cancel their February meeting due to impassable snow, but rescheduled for April, when they host Mary Conrad, who will speak on "The Archaeology of John Dougherty's Multnomah Mansion, Liberty, Missouri." "Multnomah Plantation was built in approximately 1854 and burned in 1963. The house was one of the most elaborate and largest Greek Revival mansions in Missouri at the time. They had a March meeting from **Gene T. Chavez**, who has been on the staff at the Kansas City Museum for 11 years. He spoke on "The Vaqueros: The Origins of the American Cowboy." Thank you to **Sheriff Jim "Hoss" Tucker** and **Tallyman Richard Reed** for keeping the Home Ranch posted on your exciting programs!

The Pikes Peak Posse had a program event in February entitled "People of the Garden of the Gods," which was presented by Toni Hamill. Their February program was on "The Mighty Midland and the Towns It Built."

Chris Matthews of the Omaha Corral told us of their VERY CREATIVE endeavor! Listen to this project: The Corral organized a Krispy Kreme Digital Dozens fundraiser that allowed **The Westerners Omaha Corral** to host a virtual campaign, where the community could purchase Original Glazed Doughnuts online and redeem them for fresh dozens at their nearest Krispy Kreme store. And who doesn't like DONUTS?!? And the best part? 50% (or more) of each sale was donated back to **The Westerners Omaha Corral**. We at the Home Ranch sure tip our hats to your resourcefulness. Nicely done Omaha and **Chris Matthews!**

The January meeting of the **Palo Duro Corral** of Amarillo, Texas, featured the talents of cowboy poets 10-year-old Kelly Wright (granddaughter of **Sheriff Mike Pacino**) and Cole Davis, age 16. Mike, Kelly and Cole are all residents of Boys Ranch.

Boys Ranch, founded by Cal Farley in 1939 for wayward boys, is located northwest of Amarillo at the site of Old Tascosa, a pioneer town where the likes of Billy the Kid and Pat Garrett walked its dusty streets. Boys Ranch is today a thriving community with a coed school, Church, museum, and residential halls. On land once known for gun fights and barroom brawls, Cal Farley's residents today learn the value of integrity, perseverance and faith in God.



REMINDER

As announced in the previous Bulletins,
but, in case you missed it:

THE HOME RANCH'S PHONE NUMBER IS 806-654-6920

This phone number that will get you through to
Delinda King, WI Secretary/Treasurer



CORRAL NEWS

CALL FOR CORRAL AND POSSE UPDATES

Please send us your notices and announcements on upcoming or past corral and posse programs and events. We love to spread the good news to other corrals and posses about the activities of their fellow Westerners!



The Spokane Corral



In the spirit of our most recent publication, the **Westerners Spokane Corral** threw a Saloon night from 1889. Sheriffs, madames, saloon keepers, trappers, missionaries, and dance hall girls all appeared for the night as our member Jeff Sims shared his research about the early saloons of Spokane, Washington that were destroyed in the great fire of 1889.

The **Spokane Corral** was established in 1955, and currently has 89 members. Spokane Corral is the only corral in Washington, Idaho, and Oregon. Our publication, the *Pacific Northwesterner*, is distributed to members and to many organizations including Princeton and Yale Universities. Our members are historians, authors, world travelers, and people interested in history.



above photo: Vice Sheriff **Susan Walker** seems in cahoots with **Sheriff Dick Jensen**.

left photo: Our **Sheriff Dick Jensen** is questioning **Madame Helen** about her activities.



Photo from LAist 89.3 website. LAist 89.3 is KPCC-FM in Los Angeles, part of Southern California Public Radio. (<https://www.kbcc.org/news>)

The Los Angeles Corral

January 2025 Round-Up:

The Los Angeles Firestorms

Editors note

Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D., former Sheriff of the Los Angeles Corral, has been an active, frequent, and prolific contributor for **Westerners International** and the **Buckskin Bulletin**.

In early January of this year, as uncontrolled fires swept through LA suburban neighborhoods, Brian began to document what he witnessed and experienced from his home in North Hills, CA. Brian shares his story with the **Buckskin Bulletin** and all WI readers.

Our Los Angeles Corral was all set to go with our first speaker of the New Year, scheduled for Wednesday, January 8, when all hell broke loose. On Tuesday night, January 7th, the wind was howling like a Banshee and my side-yard storage shed roofs banged like gongs, keeping me awake. The local winds were sustained at around 75 mph, but were gusting to both north and south at over 100 mph. Humidity was single-digit.

No rain had fallen for almost a year so on every hillside was tinder-dry brush. I turned on the TV at 2 A.M. to find my worst fears realized: two different wind-driven fires were burning out of control, one to the south, the other to the east. Multiple TV channels were covering the fire news non-stop, and all normal programming was interrupted. As soon as it got light around 6 A.M., I began wetting down my roof, plugging up the rain gutter drains and filling the gutters full, and also flooding my back yard. I woke up my next-door neighbors at the very late hour (for me) of 9:30 A.M. to tell them to start flooding their own back yard, and was surprised to learn that they knew nothing about the fires.

Over the next several days our power went off, then came back on. Our internet died, then came back on, then died again. For days at a time half of our TV channels were dead, including the one with the most accurate fire reporting. The channel that came in strongest of those remaining was the one where geographically-challenged reporters located active fires in the *wrong places*. They also mixed up the names of the places most likely to burn next, substituting *Woodland Hills* for *West Hills*, and *Palos Verdes* for the *Palisades Fire*. The first two are ten miles apart, at opposite ends of the San Fernando Valley (where we live) while the second are 30 miles apart on the L.A. County Coast. You couldn't *plan* to cause more anxiety if you tried than having brain-dead TV reporters getting the place-names wrong, and mixing up un-burned areas with those afire. . .

On Wednesday morning, January 8th, within the first several hours of the firestorms both the L.A. County Sheriff and the LAPD Chief of Police issued a “stay off the roads/streets” warning. So we canceled that night’s Los Angeles Corral Westerner’s monthly meeting with only 7 hours advance notice. Getting in touch with everybody who had signed up for it was quite a chore, but done successfully. Later that first day the TV news showed dozens of panicked people in the Pacific Palisades trying to evacuate down their main 4-lane, two-way road stopped by one doofus at the bottom, who stalled his car. Later evacuees went 4-abreast then everybody in all four lanes were trapped because nobody shoved the lowermost abandoned car out of the way. So, like lemmings to the sea, more than a hundred people just left their cars blocking that one access road and walked away from them. The L.A. Fire Department had to bring in a Caterpillar tractor to shove abandoned BMWs and Mercedes SUVs out of the way, clearing one lane out of four, so that Fire Trucks could get up that road to fight the fire. If one (1) LAPD traffic cop had been on duty with one (1) tow truck at the bottom of the road, where it hit the main evacuation route, Sunset Boulevard, such Darwinian Selection—mass hysteria caused by bad judgement and lack of intelligence—never would have happened.

New, wind-driven fires started just about every 12 hours or so. So just because we dodged one fiery bullet, didn’t mean we could relax. New fiery bullets were shot by Ma Nature, day after day. On the second day, Thursday January 9, in the middle of a phone call from my youngest brother in southern Arizona, both my wife and my daughter shoved cell phones up into my face with **mandatory evacuation notices**. So I cut the call short, and began tossing computer thumb-drives, last will and testament, etc. into one (1) suitcase preparatory to *vamoosing* to the nearest large open space with no overhanging trees. I selected one (1) pistol out of dozens, and one (1) long gun out of ditto, and got plenty of ammo for both, just in case the fires triggered armageddon. I yanked both my laptop and my big computer from their normal nesting places, and piled everything up by the door, ready for loading into our cars. We agreed upon our family evacuation plan: all four of us to leave in four different cars, and rendezvous at a hotel next to the Burbank Airport, a reasonably central point farthest from all of the fires then burning. This way if the airport or hotel went up, or both did, we could still hopefully avoid the flames by standing out on the runway. I had invaded far too many small Central American countries over the past 50 years not to be able to plan an evacuation like this: this time, however, not for students nor employees, but for my own wife and kids. Then, a short time later, we received a *Never Mind, we made a Boo-Boo* Email correction. Apparently, some idiot in the Los Angeles Emergency HQ pushed the wrong button and sent out the **Emergency Evacuation** notice to all 17 Million people in L.A. County *by mistake*. Heads should really roll on this one, and I would be very happy to swing the axe myself. To prevent future re-occurrences they should persuade some 13-year-old kid with his cell phone glued to his ear to step off his skateboard to run that whole Department.

On Day 3, I got the word that my old local Boy Scout Camp, **Camp Josepho** in Rustic Canyon where I taught hundreds of Scouts to shoot .22 rifles, and where I also taught a UCLA archaeological field class more than twenty years ago, burned up in one of the seven fires raging in Los Angeles County. Josepho was a Russian immigrant who made good in the U.S.A. and thought so much of his adopted country that he gave his property to the Boy Scouts ninety years ago. The irony is that it is right next to the old Murphy Ranch, which was the home base of the American Nazi Party in Los Angeles during the late ‘30s and early ‘40s, up to December 8th, 1941, when it was raided by the FBI. All of the Nazi bunkers built in anticipation of the “Race War” the Nazi goons were actively inciting, are still there. This point-counterpoint of Good vs Evil in that one small canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains is a cautionary tale still valid today.

The conflagration we were most worried about, the **Hurst Fire** in and near Sylmar, went from 50 to 850 acres in a matter of hours. For several days the news media said it was 70% contained but never specified in *which direction*. We hoped that this “containment” was on its southern front, in our own direction. The Gun Range that I used to run a dozen years ago was a short distance away from this Hurst Fire, and was evacuated on the very first day, Wednesday the 8th, but didn’t burn down. Although this fire was 6 miles away, embers can blow from Palm Tree to Palm Tree over many miles and have done so many times before with disastrous results. And that fire was to our *north*, with 100mph gusts blowing over it towards the *south*, in the direction of my reclusive hermit next-door neighbor’s place with the head-high dead weeds choking his back yard, and the four palm trees with tinder-dry dead fronds hanging down only 30 feet away from the north wall of my own house.

By the end of the firestorms the death toll, from only two of them, stood at 29, but the number of “missing” from day to day fluctuated between 24 and 40. The cadaver dogs were put to work even before the fires were out, and it will be weeks before we know how many of the MIA folks are already amongst the *unidentified* dead. By the end of the first day the LAPD/Sheriff’s Department had arrested 3 looters, and only a couple of days later those in handcuffs numbered more than 40. One looter was caught wearing a fireman’s coat, and two others were caught with a fake fire truck they had parked in an evacuation zone. Those unfortunates who lost their homes or relatives to the fires said: “Just knock those criminals on the head, and toss them into the nearest spot-fire.” By the end of the first week the California National Guard was mobilized, and guardsmen were on just about every street corner in the two worst fire areas, Pacific Palisades and Altadena. One of the seven fires burning at the firestorm’s climax may have started as arson, and one suspected arsonist was in custody. Again, those poor folks who lost their homes recommended *burning at the stake* as the most appropriate punishment.

For my own part I am disappointed by the constant references by news reporters and government officials to the January 2025 L.A. Fires as the *Worst-ever in California history*. These ignoramuses were sleeping in the back of the classroom

during 3rd grade California History when the **1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire** was the assignment. My paternal Grandmother drove her one-horse buckboard up to the top of Wolfback Ridge above her home town of Sausalito, California, and watched San Francisco burn for three days and nights in April 1906. The booming sound she heard a couple of miles away on the other side of the Golden Gate was the Dynamite Squads at work, blowing up hundreds of buildings in an attempt to stop the post-Earthquake fires. The same earthquake that had caused dozens of small fires to join together into **the worst fire in California history** had also broken all of the water mains, leaving all but a very few fire hydrants dry. Some of the booms my grandmother heard were made by U.S. Army Artillery Sergeant Dillon, my grandfather, leading one of the dozen-plus dynamite squads. She met him three years later, then married him the following year. In 1906 *tens of thousands of buildings in San Francisco* were lost, an estimated 90% of the city, and more than 3,000 people burned to death. Much more recently, the 2018 **Camp Fire** fire killed 85 people in **Paradise**, California, most of them trapped in their cars trying to get out of town, and destroyed more than 18,000 structures, 90% of all the buildings in that town.

So, without diminishing the recent tragedy of anyone who lost family members or their own homes, by comparison with the 1906 and 2018 disasters we got off lightly in the January 2025 Los Angeles firestorms. Or is it possible that some news reporters and politicians don't think that San Francisco and Paradise are part of California? Or that anything more than a hundred years old, or even only seven years old, doesn't count? Such bone-headedness is just proof of the old truism: *those who do not know their own history are doomed to repeat it.*

Meanwhile, back to January, 2025: Some idiot was flying a drone over the **Palisades Fire**, and it hit one of the two Super-Duper-Water-Scoopers that we rent from Quebec each year, so that water-dropping airplane had to be grounded. By the end of the firestorms there would be forty more cases of different idiots flying drones over the fires, forcing all water drops to cease and desist until the cops could find the morons playing with their expensive airborne toys and persuade them to stop. Only in L.A., where make-believe trumps reality, every time. As I keep reminding people, I just *live* here...I am not *from* here. The appropriate punishment for Drone Morons should be defenestration from a very great height, preferably from a water-dropping helicopter. Each could "live the dream...just like a drone" on his way down.

Around 30% of all the hydrants on the biggest (23,450+ acres) fire went dry the first day, mostly because the million-gallon reservoir built up the hill above them specifically for fire-fighting was intentionally drained last year for desultory upgrades to its "canopy," not for any repairs to its cement structure. The thinking was that since Winter, 2024/2025 was not "Fire Season" it was O.K. to dump all of the water that only a couple months later would be needed to fight the **Palisades Fire**. Boy, heads should really roll over this incredibly stupid move. Ain't no "fire season" in California any more, and there hasn't been for about the past 20 years. Fire season now goes from January 1 to December 31, as anybody that lives or

works in the woods knows: this is only "news" to urban bureaucrats and politicians, the "chairborne" brigade.

The **Palisades Fire** eventually burned along 25+ miles of ridge-lines in the Santa Monica Mountains, where I taught field archaeology classes year after year more than 40 years ago. I also surveyed every inch of the Malibu coastline (27+ miles worth) for Malibu 35 years ago just before it was incorporated as a City. The fires didn't hurt any of the archaeological sites I recorded, but wiped out over 6,800 modern structures, including the dream homes of many Malibu millionaires. Some of these folks set their dogs on me way back when I was doing the archaeological survey of the Malibu strip: poetic justice took a long time to kick in, but it finally did. The other really big fire (14,000+ acres) burning to the northeast around 18 miles away clobbered our 2025 Deputy Sheriff's Garage/Office but spared his house. Fortunately, Joseph Cavallo and his wife got out in time, but unfortunately, his priceless book collection burned to ashes, as did his computer and all of his computer files. This one, the **Eaton Fire** in Altadena/Pasadena destroyed over 9,400 homes and businesses, many more than the Palisades Fire.

Hundred of fire engines with their trained crews came to L.A. from all over Northern California, Southern Arizona, and also Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Utah, and even New Mexico. Canada (British Columbia) sent engines and crews to help out, as did Mexico. By the end of the first week of the firestorms only about 50% of the fire-fighters were from LAFD or L.A. County Fire. CDF/CALFIRE, who I worked for on contract for 17 years, was running the air attack effort and doing an outstanding job. I never fought a fire with CDF, but many times I was the very first guy on different forest fires, including arson fires, "after containment," doing the post-fire archaeological assessments. I never did a human fire fatality recovery, but encountered plenty blown-up deer, coyotes, porcupines, etc., even mama and baby bears running through the hot ashes with singed and still-smoking fur. And, I am one of the very few guys neither fire-fighter nor forester to have had foscheck dropped on me (not intentionally, I might add) from an air attack fixed-wing.

The final chapter in the January 2025 firestorm saga, at least from my own perspective, was when the **Palisades Fire** burned over the crest of the Santa Monica Mountains and started heading down towards the San Fernando Valley where I live. We were not terribly worried, since it would have to burn up about 2 million folks to our south before it got to my neighborhood, and the winds thankfully remained in our favor. A round-robin air attack by over a dozen water-dropping helicopters and 4 fixed-wing foscheck dumpers, both prop planes and jets, stopped the advance from getting down on the valley floor, so we breathed a big sigh of relief. This air attack really saved our bacon. Hats off to those pilots and to the ground crews that put their lives on the line, and never gave up, nor ever stopped. And my sympathy and prayers for all of the people who lost their lives, their homes, their businesses, and their hopes and dreams in the January 2025 Los Angeles Firestorms.

Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D.



in memory

of our Westerner Friends



Dr. Garry Lynn Nall

August 12, 1936 — November 1, 2024

Dr. Garry Nall was the last surviving founding member of the **Palo Duro Corral of Westerners International**. The Corral was formed in 1974 by local West Texas historians intent on the study of our vibrant legacies.

Garry, a 1954 graduate of Graham (Texas) High School, earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Texas in 1958 and 1959, respectively. He joined the West Texas State College faculty as an instructor in 1963 "with the intention of staying one year." That was 63 years ago. He received his doctorate from Oklahoma University in 1972. He was a visiting professor in Agriculture History from 1984 to 1985; he spent several summers doing workshops for teachers at the University of Texas, NTSU, and the Marsh Lectures at Amarillo College. Garry remained an integral and involved member of the WT community throughout his tenure. He retired in 2001.

On June 3, 1978, he married Annette Fowler. He and Annette were long-time members of Polk Street Methodist Church. He taught the 50/50 Sunday School Class for many years and served as president of the S.T.A.R.S. He was also the church historian, publishing the Polk Street Methodist Centennial Book dating from 1888-1988. Garry was also a member of the Texas Panhandle Heritage Foundation, where he was a past president and served on the board for many years. He was a greeter who was instrumental in the opening night reception of the play TEXAS and served as a board Emeritus member. He received the Gilvin Award from the TEXAS play. He also served as a board member and was a past president of the West Texas Historical Association and Emeritus Board Member for many years.

In 2016, the Center for the Studies of the American West (CSAW) at West Texas A&M University launched the Garry L. Nall Lecture Series as a bi-annual signature event typically held in October that features a Western American Scholar, while the Spring signature event in April features Western American authors.

Garry is survived by his wife Annette.

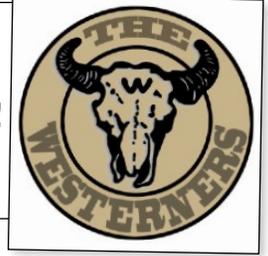
If your Corral has lost a valued member due to their passing, we would love to honor their contributions and their memory by recognizing them in this space. Please send a prepared obituary along with a photo if possible to: kenneth.pirtle@me.com or to the Home Ranch at westerners@mail.wtamu.edu



Archaeologist Brian Dervin Dillon on his mule, Sierra de Chinajá, Alta Verapaz,

CONGRATULATIONS

To Living Legend Awardee Brian Dervin Dillon!!



Brian Dervin Dillon, of the LA Corral, has been awarded the Living Legends Award by Westerners International after having been nominated by LA Corral members with “full-throated exuberance.”

Brian has been a champion and defender of all things Western for many years, and his background, education, and accomplishments all attest to his commitment, research, and endless enthusiasm.

A native Californian, his interest in the West was perhaps inevitable since he was raised by one of the most prominent and productive California historians of all time, Richard H. Dillon, Living Legend No. 46 (1924-2016). As a child he sat in his father’s office at the Sutro Library watching and learning about the work of research and writing.

Brian attended the University of California, Berkeley, becoming a Phi Beta Kappa in 1973. He received a doctorate in Anthropology at age twenty-five in 1979, the youngest Ph.D in Archaeology ever at UC Berkeley. Upon graduation he was immediately hired as an archaeologist by UCLA, also as the youngest in that school’s history.

He worked in his chosen field throughout his professional career in Central America, California, and, indeed, much of the world.

In a recent interview he shared what fascinates him most about New World Archaeology: AmerIndian civilizations, and how they came to be. “Having worked for fifty years both in California and in the Maya area, I am one of the very, very few archaeologists that can compare and contrast both what is, and what isn’t archaeological civilization based on hands-on field work.”

In 2013 he joined the Los Angeles Corral at the urging of his father (who had been a corresponding member of the corral since 1953) and long-time member Abe Hoffman. In 2016 he became deputy sheriff, and the following year sheriff. In 2021 he was made an “Honorary Member,” a status reserved for those who have given unique support and dedication to the corral.

Among his many contributions to the Los Angeles Corral, he resurrected the long-dormant publication committee, and under his leadership greatly aided or directed the publication of Brand Books 23, 24, 25, and 26 (2019 thru 2023). He is the author of Brand Book 25, Aloha Amigos, containing a biography of Richard Dillon and complete bibliography of his published works. It was awarded WI’s Best Book award.

In addition to his membership in the Los Angeles Corral, he has been active in three others: Huntington (Pasadena, California), Valley of the Sun (Fresno, California), and San Francisco, where he has shared numerous presentations. Additionally, he serves as representative of the Los Angeles Corral to Westerners International and serves on the board of WI.

He has published more than 250 articles, monographs, and books. His awards and honors are legion, including many from Westerners International.

Perhaps of more value than any of these myriad of accomplishments is Brian’s generosity in encouraging and aiding his fellow westerners in all their pursuits, historical and personal. I can personally attest to his kindness and interest in others. I am deeply in debt to him for a variety of kindnesses.

Brian’s leadership in corral affairs has been invaluable in promoting the work and production of one of WI’s strongest organizations. Indeed, the corral continues to be inspired by his dedication

It is, indeed, an honor and privilege to award the well-deserved Living Legend Award to Brian Dervin Dillon.

Congratulations Brian, from the Home Ranch!!

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."



Fort Smith, Arkansas *and The Hanging Judge*

Fort Smith, Arkansas, is one of the most historic towns in our country, as well as one of the oldest. This is its story.

Soon after the United States acquired the 828,000 square miles that were included in the Louisiana Purchase, President Thomas Jefferson, in 1806, sent the Pike Expedition to explore the western and southern areas of the newly acquired lands. Commanded by Zebulon Pike, the group went all the way to Colorado, where they discovered and named Pikes Peak, and then Pike sent part of his force east, with orders to follow the Arkansas River all the way to the Mississippi. Other than a handful of Colonial fur traders who might have come up the Arkansas from the Mississippi in order to trade with the local Indians, Pike's men would have been the first white men to ever see the area.

In 1817, General Thomas Adams Smith, who commanded the United States Army Rifle Regiment in St. Louis, ordered Army topographical engineer Major Stephen H. Long to find a suitable site for a fort on the Arkansas River in order to maintain peace between local Osage Indians and emigrating Cherokees. Back in 1808, when the federal government forced about 2,000 Cherokee to move from their ancestral homeland in the Southeast into northern Arkansas, the Osage were already there and had always used the land for hunting. The food supply started to diminish due to an increase in population, and that resulted in a war between the two tribes. The federal government had to find a solution to the problem it had created.

Major Long selected a spot where the Poteau River joined the Arkansas, a spot that had been occupied by Indians for hundreds of years. Due to the availability of fresh water, there was plenty of wild game, and the

Indians also used the rivers for transportation and trading. French trappers who had regularly visited the area and even used it as a rendezvous point, called it Belle Point. Major Long named the fort after his boss, General Smith, although the general never visited the site.

A stockade was built and occupied by a small troop of regulars that was commanded by Major William Bradford. Bradford had been wounded in the War of 1812, and most of the men of Company A Rifle Regiment were veterans of that war. What they built was a typical frontier fort. It was 132 feet square, and enclosed within the 10-foot palisade walls were 22 buildings, some of which were used as quarters for the men and the officers. The rest were used as offices, shops, a hospital, a post sutler, and storage. Two block houses were built on opposite corners of the square, and a flag pole was located in the middle of the parade ground.

When the fort was completed, the men planted gardens and began to raise crops and livestock. Some of the soldiers' wives even joined them at the fort, working as laundresses. Then a small settlement began forming around the fort, and it became even more of a center for fur trading. But by 1822, the Osage and Cherokee made peace, and in 1824, the Army abandoned Fort Smith and moved 80 miles west to Fort Gibson. However, John Rogers, who was an Army sutler and a land speculator, recognized the significance of the area due to the trading up and down the river, and bought up the government-owned lands around the former fort. He then promoted growth of a new civilian town that he called Fort Smith.

But the citizens of the town wanted the fort back, primarily because the soldiers frequented the many businesses that surrounded the facility, and soon after Arkansas gained statehood in 1836, its citizens successfully lobbied for the construction of a new garrison at Fort Smith. In 1838, the Army moved back into the old military post near Belle Point. The new commander at this time was Colonel Zachary Taylor, who would later become U.S. President. Thousands more Choctaw and Cherokee were being moved from their homes in the Southeast and settled in Indian Territory, which would become Oklahoma, and it was up to the Army to maintain order. This movement would later become known as the Trail of Tears, and as early as 1831, the Arkansas River became part of the water route for the Trail of Tears. During the early part of the forced removal of the Southeastern tribes from their homelands, Fort Smith's log buildings held supplies for the Choctaw.

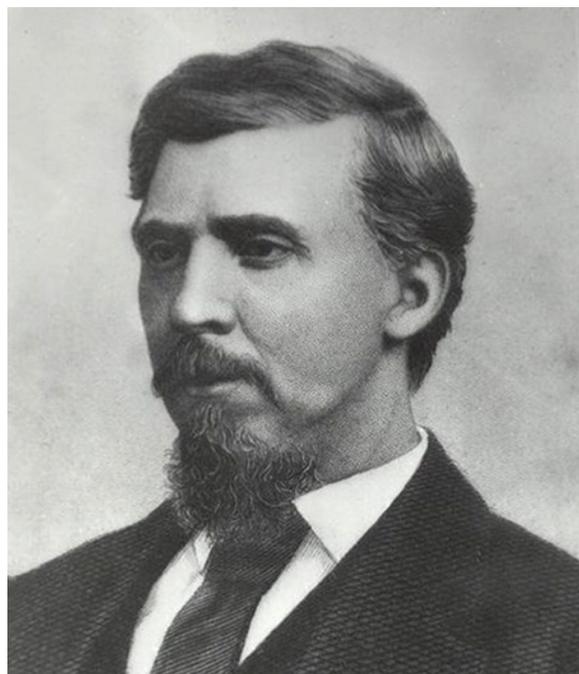
Construction on the new post was finished in 1846, and the new Fort Smith became one of the rallying points and supply depots for troops headed to the Mexican-American War, which was being fought over international boundary disputes.

In 1858, Fort Smith was designated as a Division Center of the Butterfield Overland Mail's 7th Division route across Indian Territory, which went from Fort Smith to Texas. It was also a junction with the mail route from Memphis, Tennessee, which was an important port on the east side of the Mississippi River.

Very early in the Civil War, Union soldiers abandoned Fort Smith, leaving it to Confederate troops until September 1, 1863, when Union general James G. Blunt took back the fort without opposition. However, there was a small battle there on July 31, 1864, but the Union army maintained command in the area until the war ended in 1865.

In 1871, the military chapter of Fort Smith closed, and the garrison was decommissioned. In 1872, the remaining buildings were turned over to the Federal Court for the Western District of Arkansas and the Indian Territory, and the old enlisted barracks became the courthouse and jail.

The Western District of Arkansas included 11 counties in western Arkansas and all of Indian Territory, which totaled more than 74,000 square miles. Both the sheer size of the region and the presence of American Indian courts, whose jurisdiction extended only to tribe members, complicated federal law enforcement efforts. Federal law applied to non-Indian U.S. citizens in the Territory. Because of the relatively wide open area, criminals from surrounding states moved in, and the Fort Smith federal court was forced to try crimes all the way from whisky peddling to murder. Then, in 1875, Isaac C. Parker was appointed federal judge by President Ulysses S. Grant.



Judge Isaac Parker

Judge Isaac Parker was born in a log cabin outside Barnesville, Belmont County, Ohio, on October 15, 1838. The youngest son of Joseph and Jane Parker, Isaac helped out on the farm, but never really cared for working out of doors. He attended the Breeze hill primary school and then the Barnesville Classical Institute.

To help pay for his higher education he taught students in a country primary school. When he was 17, he decided to study law, his legal training consisting of a combination of apprenticeship and self-study. Reading law with a Barnesville attorney, he passed the Ohio bar exam in 1859 at the age of 21. During this time, he met and married Mary O'Toole and the couple had two sons, Charles and James. Over the years, Parker built a reputation for being an honest lawyer and a leader of the community.

After passing the bar, he worked as an attorney in Missouri, and in 1868, Parker sought and won a six-year term as judge of the Twelfth Missouri Circuit. A new judge, Parker would soon gain the experience that he would later use as the ruling Judge over the Indian Territory.

Parker was appointed to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas on March 19, 1875, and he arrived in Fort Smith on May 4. He held court for the first time on May 10, during which eight men were found guilty of murder and sentenced to death. Judge Parker held court six days a week, often up to ten hours each day and tried 91 defendants in his first eight weeks on the bench. In that first summer, 18 persons came before him charged with murder, and 15 were convicted. Eight of them were sentenced to die on the gallows on September 3, 1875. However, only six would be executed as one was killed trying to escape and a second had his sentence commuted to life in prison because of his youth. On hanging day, the six felons were seated along the back of the gallows. Their death warrants were read to them and each was asked if they had any last words. When the preliminaries were over, the six were lined up on the scaffold while the executioner adjusted the nooses around their necks. The trap was sprung and all six died at once at the end of the ropes. More than 5,000 people watched the hanging.

Though the hangings were an indication that the court was functioning, Parker's critics dubbed him the "Hanging Judge." However, most of Parker's critics didn't live in the frontier and did not understand the lack of ethics in the untamed Indian Territory. During this

turbulent time, at least 70 deputy marshals died in the line of duty. Most of the local people approved of Parker's judgments, feeling like the utter viciousness of the crimes merited the sentences imposed. From these first six hangings in 1875, there would be 73 more until Parker's death in 1896.

Even though history refers to Judge Parker as the Hanging Judge, at the time, capital offenses of rape and murder were punished by death. It was not for the judge to decide guilt, that was up to the jury, and Parker actually had no say in whether a person was to be hanged or not. He only followed the law.

Parker's court had final jurisdiction over the Indian Territory from 1875 until 1889, as there was no court available for appeals. But, on May 1, 1889, changes made by Congress allowed appeals of capital convictions to the United States Supreme Court. Forty-four cases in which Parker imposed the death penalty were appealed to the Supreme Court, which overturned and ordered a re-trial for 30 of them.

Though Parker was hard on killers and rapists, he was also a fair man. He occasionally granted retrials that sometimes resulted in acquittals or reduced sentences.

Over the years, Parker became very involved in the community of Fort Smith. At his urging, the government gave the majority of the 300-acre military reservation to the city in 1884 to fund the public school system, and he was active on the school board. He also served many positions besides judge in the community, including serving as the first board president of Saint John's Hospital.

In 1889, Congress established a federal courts system in Indian Territory, which decreased the size of Parker's jurisdiction, and in 1896, another act removed the last of Parker's Indian Territory jurisdiction. However, when the August 1896 term began, Parker was too ill to preside, and he died on November 17, 1896. He is buried in the Fort Smith National Cemetery, only blocks from where he once presided as judge. His courtroom is now the Fort Smith National Historic Site.



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

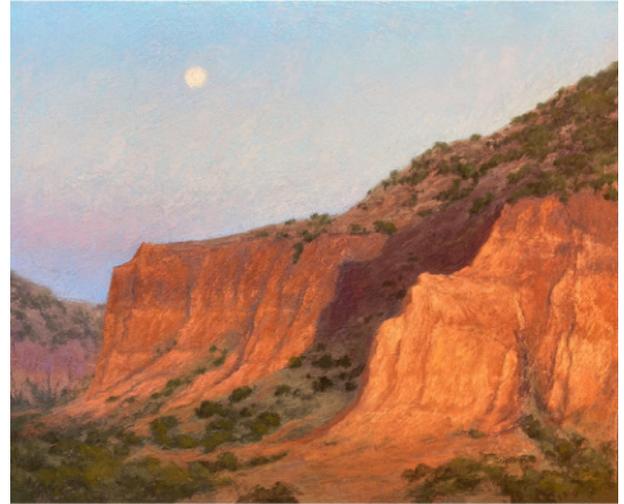


JERI SALTER: RUGGED BEAUTY OF THE TEXAS PANHANDLE

PPHM invites you view the amazing paintings of Jeri Salter. Often compared to Frank Reaugh for their shared medium and subject matter, Salter's work is very much of her own hand and her own time. She takes photographs and notes in the field, returning to her studio where she edits elements within her compositions, elevating the natural beauty of the land into something exceptional.

Salter has secured her place among the state's most significant contemporary artists, having been featured in the 2017 project Texas Rivers and Texas Art, selected as a member of the "Contemporary Texas Regionalists" and, most recently, finding inspiration in Palo Duro Canyon and Caprock Canyons State Parks in The Art of Texas State Parks. Salter also created a body of work in response to Frank Reaugh's iconic sketching trips, which makes up a significant portion of the museum's art collection.

In the Bugbee Gallery - Opening April 2025



Garry L. Nall Lecture Series with Christian Wallace (of Landman fame): "Storytelling in the West Texas Oil Patch" April 10, 7-8:30 pm Legacy Hall, JBK Free and open to the public



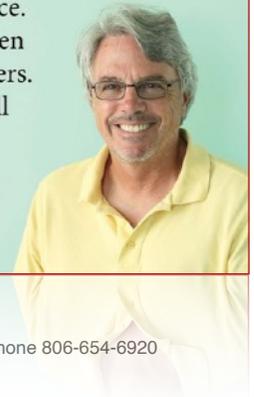
Bonney MacDonald Book Award Event honoring recipient Tracy Daugherty Award for book-- Larry McMurtry: A Life April 16 Details TBA

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

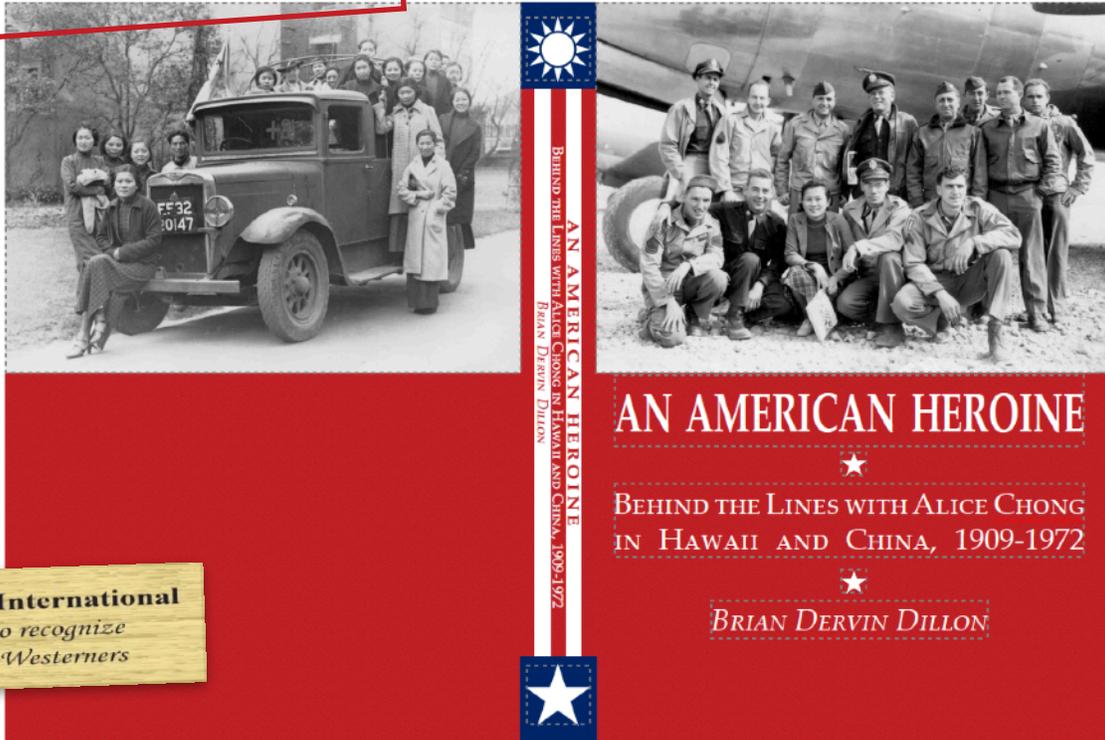




BOOK NEWS

OF INTEREST TO WESTERNERS

Now Available



Westerners International
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Back cover photo: Alice Chong (on truck bumper) with Ginling College students and fellow faculty members, Shanghai, China, 1938, before leading them to safety 2,800 miles from the invading Japanese.

Front cover photo: Alice Chong with some 14th USAAF friends on the old Flying Tigers air strip, Kunming, China, 1944. She was the only American-born Chinese woman working with General Chennault in World War II.

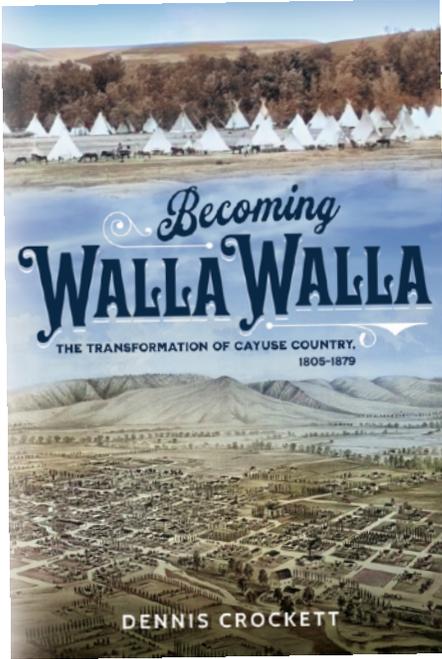
Alice Chong was the most unique American woman of World War II. A talented linguist, she spoke three different Chinese languages, Hawaiian, Japanese, and English. One of only two American-born Chinese women teaching at **Ginling College** (1938-1943), Alice was the *only* American-born Chinese woman **War Correspondent** publishing articles in the Honolulu Newspapers (1938-1940) and the *only* American-born Chinese woman working for General Claire (**Flying Tigers**) Chennault at his Kunming **14th U.S. Army Air Force** base as his interpreter and intelligence expert (1943-45). Born on Kauai, Alice grew up in Honolulu, graduated from the University of Hawaii, and taught English in Peking (1933-1936) then in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Chengdu (1937-1943), while the Japanese waged war on China.

Author Brian Dervin Dillon, an archaeologist with a Ph.D. from U.C. Berkeley, married into Alice Chong's Hakka Chinese family and interviewed her relatives over a 50-year period. Through Alice's own words and photographs and Dillon's exhaustive research, people, places and events unfamiliar to most modern-day Americans come alive in this new, profusely-illustrated, book.

Available from Amazon.com

To order your copy type in the title: **An American Heroine** or the author's name: **Brian Dervin Dillon** Published in 2025, Soft cover, 7 x 10", 468 pages, illustrations, end notes, appendices, bibliography. **Price: \$27.50, plus shipping.**

BOOK NEWS *OF INTEREST TO WESTERNERS*



Established at a fortunate location just prior to the Idaho gold rush, by 1875 Walla Walla, Washington, was the second largest city in the Pacific Northwest, and the largest and most affluent in Washington Territory. Unlike most others, a new book from Washington State University Press, **Becoming Walla Walla: The Transformation of Cayuse Country, 1805-1879**, by Dennis Crockett offers an in-depth history of this fascinating place, rather than a celebratory chronicle of "heroic" pioneers. "The focus of this book is the physical, demographic, and cultural transformation of the Walla Walla Valley and the city's current site," says the author. "This is a book I wish I could have read upon moving to the area in 1992."

Published by Washington State University Press, **Becoming Walla Walla**, paperback, 6" x 9", 360 pages, \$27.95. Available through bookstores nationwide, direct from WSU Press at 800-354-7360, or online at wsupress.wsu.edu.
A nonprofit academic publisher associated with Washington State University in Pullman, Washington



Within Adobe Walls

Author: Pete "Smokey" Dryer

An accurate history of The Yuma Territorial Prison, one of the most infamous prisons of the nineteenth century. Beginning in 1876 with the interesting explanation of how Yuma was picked for the location of Arizona's first prison. Relating, year by year, the construction and growth of the facility as subsequent superintendents strove to make improvements to keep pace with the ever-growing population and ease the hardship of their inmates. Including the stories of many of the inmates, their riots, escapes and deaths as they fought to survive in the place known as "The Hell Hole".

About the Author: Smokey and his wife have performed in historical reenactments and character portrayals for over thirty years in California and Nevada. They moved to Arizona and continued to pursue their interest in local history. He is currently a tour guide at the old Yuma prison and gives presentations of local characters and historical prison events.

Hard cover, \$52.99, Soft cover, \$30.99 eBook, \$3.99 452 Pages, 47 Photos

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