Review of Texas Books

Volume XXI Issue 4

Fall 2006

Luby's Cafeterias, Carol Dawson and Cara Jordan...

The Biker's Guide to Texas: 25 Great Motorcycle Rides in the Lone Star State, Dorothy Waldman

Deep Time and the Texas High Plains: History and Geology, Paul H. Carlson

A Small Town in Texas: Reflections on Growing Up in the '50s and '60s, Glenn A. Dromgoole

Hellcats: The 12th Armored Division in World War II, John C. Ferguson

Hemisfair '68 and the Transformation of San Antonio, Sterlin Hollaney

The Texas Indians, David La Vere

Patrolling Chaos: The U.S. Border Patrol in Deep South Texas, Robert Lee Maril

The Civil War: A Concise Account by a Noted Southern Historian, Grady McWhiney

20 Good Reasons to Study the Civil War, John C. Waugh

Driver: Six Weeks in an Eighteen-Wheeler, Phillip Wilson

It Happened in San Antonio, Marilyn Bennett

Big Bend National Park, Laurence Parent and Joe Nick Pataski

Over Land and Sea: A Story of International Adoption, Steven L. Layne

Katherine Stinson Otero High Flyer, Neda Skinner Petrick

The Diaries of John Gregory Bourke, Volume One, November 20, 1872-July 28, 1876, Charles M. Robinson III, Editor

Our House on Hueco, Carlos Nicolas Flores

America's 100th Meridian: A Plains Journey, Monte Hartman

Javelinas: Collared Peccaries of the Southwest, Jane Manasse

The Ballad of O'Hook, Tom Townsend

Insiders' Guide: Off the Beaten Path, 6th ed. Texas, June Naylor

Amarillo: The Story of a Western Town, Paul H. Carbon

A Life on Paper: The Drawings and Lithographs of John Thomas Biggers, Olive Jensen Thomas

Mexican Light: Healthy Cuisine for Today's Cook, Kris Rudolph

Civil War to the Bloody End: The Life and Times of Major General Samuel P. Heintzelman, Jerry Thompson
Editors’ Choice: *House of Plenty: The Rise, Fall, and Revival of Luby’s Cafeterias*

Carol Dawson and Carol Johnston

**The Privilege of Dining Out**

Review by Dale Farris

Authors Dawson (The Mother-in-Law Diaries, Meeting the Minotaur), freelance Austin writer, and Johnston, the only child of Luby’s Cafeteria co-founder and executive Charles R. and Gertrude Johnston, provide a dramatic story of the well known Luby’s Cafeteria chain. Beginning with a gripping account of the 1997 vicious suicide (he stabbed himself nineteen times with a large kitchen knife - three wounds in the neck each serious enough to have killed him) by 49-year old John Edward Curtis, Jr., just two months after he had been named president and CEO of the Luby’s corporation, the authors find answers to the troubling questions raised by his death within the context of the story of the Luby’s company. Dawson and Johnston thoroughly probe the fascinating legacy of this unique American business from its early beginnings to its current era under the new ownership and direction of Harris and Chris Pappas. The Pappas brothers are successful entrepreneurs well known in the food service business for their Pappadeaux Seafood Kitchens, Pappasito’s Cantinas, the Pappas Brothers Steak House, and other highly successful upscale restaurants.

The story begins with haberdashery owner Harry Luby’s 1909 buying trip to Chicago when he first experienced dining in The Dairy Lunch, a simple, unpretentious eatery where customers chose their meals from a variety of dishes displayed on a counter. Diners served themselves and carried their own trays to a table, thus eliminating any middle person waitstaff. Fascinated with the idea of customers walking down a line gathering their own entrees and side dishes, an idea borrowed from the Ford assembly line, Luby was as drawn by the low cost of the procedure as by its efficiency. In 1910, while trying his hand at tilling the soil in Springfield, Missouri, after he closed his unprofitable haberdashery shop, Luby was contacted by a sales representative from a newly organized restaurant supply house. Abandoning all his former caution, Luby placed an order. Within a few months, he built a 12-foot counter, arranged a few tables and chairs, and opened The New England Dairy Lunch in Springfield at a total setup cost of $1,200, featuring his signature item, the New England Boiled Dinner. His excellent food and thrifty prices soon made his idea an instant winner, and this set the stage for the many Luby’s cafeterias that were soon to come.

Luby’s idea helped democratize the privilege of dining out for even the least prosperous American families over the 20th century, and the authors nicely place the Luby’s Cafeteria concept within the broader trend across the country of the increase in eating out of the home and the growth of cafeterias, especially the Horn & Hardart Automats. However, the key difference with Harry Luby was his intent to expand his idea across state lines, something at the time that was new to the country. The story continues with the discussion of the rapid expansion of many new Luby’s cafeterias, including the Beaumont, Texas, Luby’s that opened in 1921, with nearly all the locations quickly flourishing. Also explained are how founder Luby helped some of his cousins start their own cafeterias and how the company experimented with various names for the stores, including The New England Cafeteria and Luby’s New England Cafeteria, with Luby ultimately settling on the Luby’s Cafeteria name.

Readers will be captivated by this extensive history of the ever-increasing number of new cafeterias, the company’s success and failures with various recipes, the attraction of the cafeterias to all types of customers, and the inner workings of the company as it continued to adapt and adjust to the cultural changes, the political trends, and the major world events that shaped life in America during the 20th century. Also revealed are the inside stories behind the company’s growth and the increased involvement by outside investors, as (Continued on page three)
well as how the Luby family began to pass down their heritage to forthcoming generations. The authors also nicely explain the relatively recent financial challenges of the company, including the new leadership by the Pappas brothers, the closing of many former Luby's sites, changes in operational procedures, and the most recent news of the company's apparent new financial solvency.

Written with the dramatic sweep of a novel, the authors draw on numerous insider stories and company records to present the major forces that propelled this company to its greatest heights, as well as its more tenuous days of drama, including a hushed-up theft that split the family for decades, the 1991 mass shooting at the Killeen Luby's, which splattered the company's good name across headlines nationwide, the rapacious over-expansion that more than doubled the company's size from 1987-1996 and helped pushed it into bankruptcy, and that apparently drove Curtis Jr. to his violent suicide.

With Luby's cafeterias feeding generations of Americans for nearly 100 years, and enough still operational today, look for strong demand for this title that is more up-to-date than Steve Barnhill's *The Luby's Story: Good Food From Good People*.

Highly recommended for university libraries supporting business curriculum and all public libraries.

---

**Dawson, Carol, and Carol Johnston.**

---

**The Biker's Guide to Texas: 25 Great Motorcycle Rides in the Lone Star State**
Dorothy Waldman

Biking Texas, from Day Trips to Long Hauls
Review by Holly Carey

As the book's subtitle implies, *The Biker's Guide to Texas* traces twenty-five rides within the Lone Star State, featuring a combination of day trips as well as longer rides that should be broken down into two or more days. The author, Dorothy Waldman, has organized the book into seven chapters that correspond with specific regions: Big Bend Country, Prairies and Lakes, Piney Woods, Hill Country, Texas Gulf Coast, South Texas Plains, and Panhandle Plains. Four rides each are highlighted for the Big Bend, Prairies and Lakes, and Piney Woods areas, while six are featured for the Hill Country and four along the Gulf Coast. Waldman includes one ride for the Southern Plains; beginning in South Padre Island, this trip progresses to Brownsville, Zapata, Hebbronville, and Riviera before concluding in Kingsville. The final chapter presents two rides within the Panhandle. A map containing specific directions and mileage from neighboring larger cities accompanies each ride as do highlights to watch for while en route. Waldman even offers suggestions for overnight stays. Finally, the book contains black and white photos of interesting tidbits, one a sign warning visitors not to feed or approach the alligators at Brazos Bend State Park, another highlighting the post office in Luckenbach, established 1846. Probably the most interesting photo is of a marquis on which Honda welcomes its visitors with the following: "Welcome: This is God's Country. Please don't drive through it like hell." An index completes this well organized guide.

(Continued on page four)
Deep Time and the Texas High Plains: History and Geology
Paul H. Carlson

Lubbock Lake
Review by Dale Farris

Texas Tech history Professor Carlson (The Cowboy Way: An Exploration of History and Culture. The Plains Indians) provides a readable history of the Lubbock Lake landmark’s long geologic past. Lubbock Lake, a nationally registered site in West Texas, is the focus in this highly localized approach to studying the early history of Earth. In his review, Carlson places an emphasis on human activity in the region, showing how early people in the area adapted to the shifting environmental conditions and changing animal resources in order to survive. The author also nicely places this significant national archaeological site in a broader perspective, connecting it to geology and history in the larger upper Brazos River drainage system and by extension, the central Llano Estacado. Using an interdisciplinary approach, Carlson consulted geological records, paleontological, anthropological, and archaeological reports, astrometrical and climatological studies, and histories of the region to reach back through the ages to explore the significance of the region to life on the Texas High Plains.

The result is a nice introduction to nearly 12,000 years of history of humans on the Texas High Plains, suitable for any reader interested in Texas history or the unique geological forces that formed and sculpted these vast lands. Carlson writes in a style that will ensure that any reader will readily relate to this understanding of how humans got to the high plains and what they did once they arrived. At the site of the Lubbock Lake landmark in the long Yellow House Draw, humans camped, hunted game, and sought shelter from harsh winter weather. Carlson’s work also helps readers understand the forces that created the Llano Estacado, as well as learn about the humans who occupied and used the Lubbock Lake area and related archaeological sites.

Carlson reviews the fascinating record of intermittent human activity at the Lubbock Lake site and by extension a small portion of the larger Llano Estacado, the Texas High Plains. He also provides a brief examination of the area’s long geological past. He goes back through what John McPhee has called “deep time,” a term that refers to a geological time scale incomprehensible to humankind, dating to half a billion years ago. In so doing, he shows how the North American continent reached its present location, surveys the development of life on Earth, and summarizes the forces that created the Texas High Plains and the Lubbock Lake site. In addition, he provides a history of human activity, from the Paleolithic and Archaic periods through the Modern era, and his work provides a broad, general account that is suitable for an educated reading public.

Highly recommended for university libraries supporting Texas history and Texas geology studies.

A Small Town in Texas: Reflections on Growing Up In The '50s and '60s
Glenn A. Dromgoole

Folksy Memories
Review by Dale Farris

Author Dromgoole (Cowboys at Heart, What Smart Cats Know, 100 Great Things About Texas), managing editor of McWhitney Foundation Press and State House Press, shares thirty-three brief personal stories in this collection that provides his reflections on changes that affected all Americans in the 1950s and 1960s. Born and raised in Sour Lake, Dromgoole has authored thirteen similar collections of his folksy, personal memories. This collection evokes fond memories of simpler times and lasting values from his childhood and young adult years that have obviously served as a solid foundation to his adult life. The stories deal with a variety of topics, including growing up barefoot in blue jeans, the early days of busking and desegregation, his early childhood, playing baseball with his brother, eating fried chicken on Sunday afternoons, living through summer without air conditioning, his first car, and his love for downtown. These charming personal reminiscences of life in the 1950s and 1960s in a small Texas town, an era long since gone, will especially appeal to Boomers now entering their retirement years.

Highly recommended for all public libraries.
Hellcats: The 12th Armored Division in World War II.
John C. Ferguson

An Illustrated History
Review by Dale Farris

After going overseas and fighting to achieve victory, most of America's 89 WWII combat divisions, including sixteen armored divisions, were disbanded and faded into obscurity. Author Ferguson provides a heavily illustrated narrative of one of these units, the 12th Armored Division, which trained on the plains of West Texas at Camp Barkley near Abilene, Texas. From its initial action, to the liberation of Nazi death camps, to the ultimate victory and peace, Ferguson tells the division's story, which also serves as a means of better understanding the true meaning of the many temporary army units that served the U.S. during the war. Author Ferguson served in the Marines, including combat duty during Operation Desert Storm, earned his M.A. in military history, and now serves as the director of the 12th Armored Division Memorial Museum in Abilene, Texas.

Ferguson's lively, succinct narrative begins with a brief synopsis of the September 15, 1942 creation of the division at Camp Campbell, Kentucky, its nom de guerre assigned as a result of a naming contest, and the initial training in the Kentucky-Tennessee area, followed by interesting chapters on the building of Camp Barkley in Abilene, Texas, the November 20, 1943 transfer of the division to Abilene, the October 1944 landing in France and its first combat in December 1944, and the bloodletting in the Herrlisheim area in mid-December 1944 when the German Army launched its largest counterattack since the Allied invasion, the "Battle of the Bulge." Ferguson continues the division's story as it fought in the race to the Rhine, liberated the Landsberg prison camp, and helped end the war in May 1945. In November 1945, the division arrived at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey; the headquarters section turned in the division's battle flags, and the division was officially deactivated.

The handy appendices provide a detailed chronology of the division's history, a heart-breaking listing of the men who died during the division's five months of combat (one in three became a casualty), a concise description of Army organizational hierarchy, and a listing of the overseas wartime assignments of the eight key army groups. Ferguson's title provides readily available access to this important story that was first exhaustively detailed in the Army and Navy Publishing Company's now out of print 1947 The Hellcats in World War II: A History of the United States Twelfth Armored Division: 13 September, 1942 - December, 1945, and nicely supplements the broader scope, large-scale WWII histories that fill the shelves.

Highly recommended for military history collections in all university libraries and public libraries in the West Texas area.

HemisFair '68 and the Transformation of San Antonio
Sterlin Holmesly

A Legacy of Change
Review by Dale Farris

Sterlin Holmesly was Sunday Editor of the San Antonio Express-News during HemisFair '68, and in his 34-year career at the newspaper he also served as managing editor and as editorial director. Drawing on oral interviews with thirty-four prominent San Antonians, Holmesly organizes their personal remembrances into the major themes of organizing the fair, the economic legacy of the event, the impact of the fair on the River Walk and the King William District, the political legacy of the event, and the influence of the event on rising East and West side activism. He also adds insightful reflections on the influence of the fair from six of the selected San Antonians on how the development of the fair changed the movement of money into new families, the impact of the energy crisis on San Antonio, the rise of heated water politics in Central Texas, and the beginning of the diverse culture that defines San Antonio today. The (Continued on page six)
two appendixes provide discussion of the development of
The University of Texas Health Science Center at San
Antonio and the newspaper wars between the San Antonio
Express, the San Antonio News, and the San Antonio Light,
both strongly influenced by the changing culture and political
interests of the dynamic city.

Rather than a history of HemisFair '68 activities and goings-
on, Holmesly instead provides intriguing personal stories
about the planning and building of the fair, its major impact
on San Antonio culture and politics, how the event attracted
people to the city from around the world and what this did to
forever change the community, how the fair set the stage for
the addition of the city of the medical school, and the long
range influence on the changing market for mass
communications.

Highly recommended for all San Antonio libraries and those
in the Hill Country area.

---

The Texas Indians
David La Vere

Tribal Societies and Their Evolutions
Review by Dale Farris

University of North Carolina at Wilmington Professor of
History La Vere provides a complete chronological and
historical history of Texas Indians from 12,000 years ago to the
present day. La Vere presents a unique view of the cultural
history of Texas Indians before and after the arrival of the
Europeans, and he examines the interactions, both peaceful
and violent, with the Europeans, Mexicans, Texans, and
Americans.

In the 1950s, the bones of a prehistoric woman were
discovered in Midland County, Texas, and were dubbed
"Midland Minnie." Believed to be between 20,000 and
37,000 years old, these ancient fossilized remains are the
oldest ever found in the Western Hemisphere and indicate the
value of unearthing ancient history underworld Texas soil. By
the time early Europeans arrived in the state in the early
1500s, native Texans had included the mound-building
Caddos of East Texas, the Karankawa and Atakapas who
fished the Texas coast, the town-dwelling Jumanos along the
Rio Grande, the hunter-gather Cohuhtecans in South Texas,
and the corn-growing Wichitas in the Panhandle. All these
carly Texans had developed structures, traditions, and
cultures that were impacted by the arrival of the Europeans
and their horses, metal tools and weapons, new ideas, and
new diseases, all of which shaped the lives of these early
Texans.

Later, the state became a home to Apaches, Comanches, and
Kiowas, and a refuge for Puebloan Tiguas, Alabama-
Coushattas, Kickapoo, and many others. These all traded,
shared ideas, fought, and made peace with each other, as
well as those outside Texas, and La Vere provides a
masterly summary of this dynamic history.

As many Texans know, the history of Texas is rich with
drama and poignancy, but author La Vere reveals that this
history is more fertile than first thought, providing a
fascinating, solidly research story of the vast state with an
emphasis on the true natives of the state and this history that
existed long before Europeans ever showed up in the
Western Hemisphere. Since the story of the European and
American colonists was written down, this naturally led to
the overshadowing of the background to early Texas
Indians.

La Vere explains how the Indians experienced change, as
well as some continuity over time, and shows how the
Indian identity has adapted to the changing state. In
addition, he eschews the jingoist approach to the natives and
looks closely at Indian politics and diplomacy, viewing
native Texas Indians as people hoping to navigate their way
through an increasingly confusing world. In addition,
readers will learn how the natives struggled to maximize
their economic well-being, while adhering to traditional
values and mores.

This is a refreshing, candid, frank analysis of native
Texans and all the same virtues and vices of
people all over the world, usually wanting the same things,
and how over the millennia they developed religious beliefs,
political structures, social configurations, and economic
strategies to achieve these goals. La Vere's title is a major
contribution to Texas history and will be of immense value
to teachers, students, scholars, and general readers of
Texas. The title is a job update, with W.W.
Newcomb's 1961 classic The Indians of Texas, considered
the first analysis of the history of Texas Indians, based on a
wealth of new information found since then. Throughout
this masterly work, the author keeps the Indians at center
stage, rather than placed as rudderless victims of Europeans.

Highly recommended for all university libraries.
Review of Texas Books

**Patrolling Chaos: The U.S. Border Patrol in Deep South Texas**
Robert Lee Maril

Challenges, Risks, and the Border Patrol
Review by Dale Farris

Prolific author Maril (*Texas Shrimpers: Community, Capitalism, and the Sea, Waltzing With the Ghost of Tom Joad: Poverty, Myth, and Low-Wage Labor in Oklahoma, The Poorest of Americans: The Mexican Americans of the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas*), East Carolina University professor and chair of the Department of Sociology, provides a documented view of the world of agents of the U.S. Border Patrol as they struggle with the overwhelming challenge to fill the gaps in the U.S.-Mexico border.

The author spent two years observing the work of the agents, and this title is based on his extensive ethnographic field work that focuses on one station of three hundred agents over a two-year period. Included among his material are his remarks as he followed twelve typical agents, men and women, as they went about their regular ten-hour patrols along the border. Readers will be fascinated as Maril describes the daily challenges and risks faced by the agents and will learn about the perspectives and insights the agents hold as a result of their extensive, first-hand experience with the hard realities of immigration policy, the war on drugs, and the threat of terrorist infiltration.

Maril also describes the surveillance and apprehension of thousands of undocumented workers, drug interdictions involving huge quantities of marijuana and cocaine, the deaths of illegal immigrants by drowning and as a result of high-speed chases, corruption among law enforcers, and other events that shape the work lives of agents. The book also describes the impact of the 9/11 attacks on border security and on the personal lives of the agents and their families.

With the Southwest rapidly becoming a majority Hispanic population, the continued immigration and border patrol issues, and the growing concern for newly forming Minutemen groups, this latest account of the world of U.S. Border Patrol agents will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of our border relations with Mexico, the people and the resources of the borderlands, the constant flow of illegal immigrants and drugs, and the new challenges confronting the enforcement of laws and policy in light of international terrorism.

Highly recommended for all university libraries and public libraries in border communities.

**The Civil War: A Concise Account by a Noted Southern Historian**
Grady McWhiney

Primer on the War
Review by Dale Farris

Author McWhiney (*Confederate Crackers and Cavaliers, Battle in the Wilderness: Grant Meets Lee*), founder of the Grady McWhiney Research Foundation at McMurry University in Abilene and author of hundreds of books and articles on Southern and Civil War history, provides an impressive, condensed account of the American Civil War that can serve as the important first words on this familiar story. For over fifty years, McWhiney has been preeminent among Southern historians specializing in the military history of the U.S. Civil War, and many of his doctoral students who are scattered around the country are among the new generation of leading historians working to understand and interpret the U.S. Civil War.

The author’s skill in illuminating deep research with stylistic writing continues in this brief primer that tells the story from its roots through its bloody end. In addition, McWhiney makes this concise narrative sing as he makes the story more than just a summary of dates and events. He stitches an array of facts, events, and a perspective that brims with meaning. He also adds life to the actors on this great stage and unites his thorough knowledge of the war with his deft writing. The result is (Continued on page eight)
Review of Texas Books

(Continued from page seven)

an excellent work on the U.S. Civil War that should be required reading for all young adult readers, as well as anyone newly entering their understanding of the war.

McWhiney begins with the debates over the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and carries readers through the Compromise of 1850 and on to the unraveling of all compromise following the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. From these events, he takes readers through the disunion and the major campaigns of the war, to its end. While of course a great deal of details have purposefully been left out in this succinct narrative, McWhiney's brief treatment of the war is a judicious, well-balanced work that will well serve any high school American history class, as well as readers who desire a more brief introduction to a history of the war.

Highly recommended for all high school and public libraries.

20 Good Reasons to Study the Civil War
John C. Waugh

More War History
Review by Dale Farris

Author Waugh (The Class of 1846, Reelecting Lincoln, Surviving the Confederacy) adds to his eight books on the nineteenth century and the Civil War with this succinct analysis of twenty of his reasons why it is important to understand the war. While admitting that works on the U.S. Civil War already overburden the stacks, Waugh has synthesized twenty of the key reasons why this subject ought to be studied by all Americans. Among his reasons include his reminder from Robert Penn Warren, who said "the U.S. Civil War was the great single event of our history," that it was a watershed in American history, it was a war of firsts, it saved republican government and killed slavery, it originated new ways of waging war and revolutionized war on the water, it teaches us brotherhood, and it showcased heroes. Other of his reasons include that it created a new industrial America, produced men of fabulous fortunes, was a war of political oddities, pioneered a new journalism, inspired great literature, tested our faith, is our own direct tie to the past, and makes us remember. Moreover, it is great drama, and it speaks to us still.

In each of the twenty brief chapters, Waugh nicely explains his reasons, places these among the times of the war, and reminds us how our current political situation and cultural state have evolved from the ashes of the war. This title well serves as the answer to many present day students who have a hard time understanding why they need to understand the war and this era of our past that continues to influence our lives to this day. The book could also be adapted for direct classroom use as a primer on the war and a marvelous lead-in for any of the countless historical analyses of the war and will well serve teachers interested in making the war come alive for contemporary times. His included concise annotated bibliographical essay provides a super complement to his reasons, offering all the solid, grand works that any student could follow through with after reading this important foundation.

Highly recommended for all university libraries and public school libraries.


Driver: Six Weeks in an Eighteen-Wheeler
Phillip Wilson

Trucker Memoir
Review by Dale Farris

Author and U.S. Navy veteran Wilson decided he'd like to see America and get someone else to pay for the trip, so he went to truck driving school to learn how to operate a big rig. The result is this unique memoir of Wilson's six weeks of ORT (over-the-road) driving as he crisscrossed the country from coast to coast and points in between. During this time he worked and lived in close quarters with his trainer partner who could hardly be less like himself. Along the way he learns how to run a "mule," what drivers call their rigs, and describes the thrill of sitting on top of a 425-horsepower diesel engine hauling 80,000 pounds of trailer and cargo. He relates what it takes to become a million-mile driver and why companies stand in line to hire them and comes to appreciate the joys of Gulf Coast cooking as he finds those special places truck drivers recommend to one another. He also learns of outlaw drivers who fudge their logbooks and does his best to stay in "the hammer lane" (the fast lane) with his gearbox in "the money hole," the top gear when the miles are accumulating and so are the dollars.

This interesting memoir will help readers better understand that driving a big truck on America's highways is among the most difficult, demanding, and highly regulated occupations open to the average American, while also being one of the least restrictive ways of life still around, a throwback to the independence and freedom of the frontier. This is a special (Continued on page nine)
(Continued from page eight) account of Wilson’s embrace of that experience and that relationship and about the thousands of semi-truck drivers who keep America supplied and running.

Wilson now lives on the Texas Gulf Coast, drives part-time, never in Winter, when he is not fishing, and his fresh, lively memoir is highly recommended for all libraries.

**Big Bend National Park**
Laurence Parent
Joe Nick Patoski

**Feast for the Soul**
Review by Mary M. Fisher

If you can’t get out to Big Bend National Park, the next best thing is to curl up with this evocative book. Eloquent in words and pictures, the gorgeous volume is a feast for the soul.

The park, notes Joe Nick Patoski, speaking for all those folk who are drawn back time and again “is my salvation, my respite, my escape from the real world, my quiet space far from the static of humanity...”

In his crisp, not-a-word-wasted essay, the author of articles in numerous magazines and of books on Selena and Stevie Ray Vaughn details the park’s geology, natural and human history and establishment as a national park, as well as recent conservation efforts.

The verbal portrait accompanies more than seven dozen stunning color photographs taken by Laurence Parent, who has illustrated or written more that two dozen books, including two previous collaborations with Patoski: *Texas Coast and Texas Mountains*.

Bathed in the cool light of dawn and the warm light of dusk and taken in all seasons, the splendid images are as varied in size as in subject. A double page image of the badlands near Study Butte is an impressionistic study in purples, blues and burnt orange; a small all-gray image of a rock rattler squiggled amongst rocks is a study in shape and form.

Then there are the many medium size images, framed in white and depicting, among other things, adobe ruins near Castolon, maple trees in fall at Boot Canyon, the moon over Lost Mine Peak, the Rio Grande in Boquillas Canyon, and blooming cacti with the mouth of Santa Elena Canyon in the far distance.

Parent’s photos evoke the pristine majesty of a park whose isolation has protected it from hordes of visitors. This magnificent visual and verbal portrait will call readers back time and again to savor the park’s wonders.

**It Happened in San Antonio**
Marilyn Bennett

**Not Just the Alamo**
Review by Mary M. Fisher

A city as colorful as San Antonio has had countless flamboyant citizens and flaming adventures. This potpourri of San Antonio stories, recounted by a sixth generation Texan from Amarillo, includes twenty-eight vignettes arranged chronologically, ranging from the establishment of the missions by the Spanish to the recent embezzlement of county money by a Ferrari-collecting employee.

Other tales recorded in chatty prose cover topics such as ghosts of Alamo Plaza, the origins of the Battle of Flowers Parade, the hanging of Bob Augustine, the erection of the Tower of the Americas and the moving (on wheels) of the Fairmount Hotel.

Though most if not all of the stories are widely known by San Antonians and none breaks new ground, newcomers and tourists will enjoy this sampling of San Antonio happenings across the centuries.

The text is not illustrated, and there are no attributions, but there is an index and bibliography, often missing in books of this type.

Marilyn Bennett grew up in Amarillo and graduated from Texas A&M University and Southern Methodist University. She currently lives in Helena, Montana.

Mary M. Fisher graduated with a master’s degree in history from the University of Texas at Austin. She is an award-winning journalist now working as a school administrator and the author of *Rosita’s Bridge*.

Andrea Karlin earned a Ph.D. in curriculum and reading instruction at the University of New Mexico and is an associate professor of education specializing in children’s literature at Lamar.
Over Land and Sea: A Story of International Adoption
Steven L. Layne

An Adoption Story
Review by Andrea Karlin

Steven Layne’s Over Land and Sea—A Story of International Adoption will be particularly appealing to parents and grandparents of children who have been adopted. These children and their sibling will also be touched by this simple but touching story which is enhanced by extraordinary illustrations by portrait artist Jan Bower.

Over Land and Sea would also be a book that teachers could read to help them initiate a conversation about adoption with their students. The beautiful children that one sees in the pictures come from all over the world, and although they may look different from their parents and other siblings, they help to make their families complete and happy.

Katherine Stinson Otero High Flyer
Neila Skinner Petrick

She Wanted to Fly
Review by Andrea Karlin

Katherine Stinson Otero High Flyer is the inspiring story of a remarkable woman who, even as child, knew that she wanted to fly. With the encouragement of her mother, she never gave up her dream and would become one of the pioneers of aviation during the early decades of the 20th century.

Written by Neila Skinner Petrick and beautifully illustrated by Daggi Wallace, one of the things that amazed me the most as I read this book is that I had never heard of or read about Stinson Otero before. She is definitely a role model, particularly for anyone who has a dream that others may discourage one from following for whatever reason. This book is a welcome biography about a true American role model for all.

The Diaries of John Gregory Bourke, Volume One: November 20, 1872-July 28, 1876
Charles M. Robinson III, editor

Aide-De-Camp and Beyond
Review by Max Loges

The Diaries of John Gregory Bourke is the first in a series of six volumes to be issued by the University of North Texas Press. Volume 1 covers the period from the fall of 1872 through the summer of 1876. John Bourke was an important figure in the west, serving as General George Crook’s aide-de-camp during several Indian wars. He later became internationally acclaimed for his studies of Indian life and culture. Bourke is also the author of On the Border with Crook, a long accepted classic account of the Indian wars.

Subjects covered in volume one include Bourke’s experiences in tracking and fighting Apaches in 1872-73. Of particular note is his account of the Skeleton Cave Massacre. Bourke also visits several Hopi villages and records numerous insightful observations about their culture.

The most historically significant part of the volume concerns Bourke’s record of and observations about Crook’s command during the great Sioux War. The lackadaisical attitude of the expedition would be almost comic if the results had not been so tragic. After a minor skirmish with the Sioux, Crook feels he has broken the back of the uprising, and he and his command enjoy a fishing trip on the very day that just seventy miles away Custer’s command is being massacred.

The book is very ably edited by Charles M. Robinson III, who includes introductions to the various subdivisions and many of Bourke’s maps and drawings. The work is a valuable contribution to an understanding of the West, but it is mainly suited for the serious scholar.
Carlos Nicolas Flores
Our House on Hueco
Carlos Nicolas Flores

A Dark, Unfinished Basement
Review by JoAn W. Martin

Junior, ten, and Rafe, five, are thrilled to be moving out of the poor section of El Paso. Their father has bought a house for his family on Hueco Street in the “gringo” part of town. His mother, Nena, is skeptical of their owning a brick house with sidewalks and concrete steps up to it and a yard with grass and a mulberry tree. It is like a dream come true.

Then Nena realizes her husband, Rico, plans for their family to live in the basement. The white family lives in the house and pays rent. Nena says their home is dark and dirty, “like a dungeon.” She is devastated. “Have we struggled almost ten years…to live in a hole?” she asks.

Pop’s strategy is to rent the house and live in the basement while he builds an apartment in the back yard. Junior is sad to leave his best friend, Boogie, but he quickly makes friends with the Americans, Kim and Tim. They share their skates and teach Junior to skate too. Tim always makes it fun when he creates make-believe games like pirates and knows how to assemble sticks to make swords. Cultures clash, however, when the Mexican kids want to celebrate Cinco de Mayo rather than July Fourth with their fireworks.

When Boogie comes across town to visit Junior, the boys overhear men discussing Junior’s father and realize he is in danger. But Pop says those men are lazy bums and drunks, no one to fear. Their mom takes the two boys and goes back to Juarez to visit their grandmother. Junior senses that her leaving his father is more than a visit home and is happy when Pop comes and begs Mom to return home.

Conflict between Anglos versus Latinos and Mexicans versus Mexicans continues to threaten their life on Hueco Street. Junior wonders if people can ever learn to live together, in respect, despite their differences. The author gives insight into the difficulties of becoming assimilated into another community, and the glossary of Spanish words translated into English is essential with many terms and sentences in Spanish.

Carlos Nicolas Flores has taught English at Laredo Community College and writes fiction about the Mexican-American Experience. He is a winner of the Chicano/Latino Literary Prize, Our House on Hueco was written because Flores’ wife suggested that he try writing “an inspiring and uplifting book.” And so he did.


America’s 100th Meridian:
A Plains Journey
Monte Hartman

A Plains Journey
Review by JoAn W. Martin

Monte Hartman made a “six trip, five year odyssey” along a two-thousand-mile line from north to south. Hartman photographed a land unlike the East or the West, considered by some as the great “empty middle.” His pictures portray scenes from North Dakota to Texas and capture history itself.

The Apaches had moved in this direction from the north in the thirteenth century. The Kiowas moved from the south in the sixteenth century. The 100th Meridian is an invisible 1900-mile North-South line at one hundred degrees west longitude. The photographs, taken from 1993-1997, made in a “swath two or three counties wide adjacent to or intersected by the line of 100 degrees west longitude. The meridian is where openness begins.”

William Kittredge writes about being privileged to watch hours and hours of 8mm home movies shot for decades by a man who had lived his life in a North Dakota town. He saw weddings, feasts, burials, and babies who grew up and had children and grandchildren of their own. He saw in the films how difficult their life was. He saw progress from homesteading days to the present. They survived because of families and neighbors.

A beautiful coffee table book, America’s 100th Meridian offers the reader photographs of (Continued on page twelve)
(Continued from page eleven)
windblown, plowed fields, windbreaks, tight homes, commercial farms, children at play, a crumbling drive-in
theater and concrete grain elevators. Sunrises and sunsets
appear as if dreamed of: “Twenty thousand miles along the
spine of America.”

In Kansas, on Highway 50, the motorist is invited to pull off
for a scenic overlook. Expecting a picture postcard view, he
sees cattle pens as far as the eye can see and smelly
stockyards. A billboard urgently says, “Eat BEEF. The West
wasn’t won on salad!”

Hearing their stories leaves the impression that this part of
America required stamina and endurance. The only way to
live here was to appreciate the stark beauty and build a life
worth living.

Monte Hartman sees the prairie as a “reservoir of values” and
a place available to get in touch with nature. Recommended
for all public libraries.

The Ballad of Ol’Hook
Tom Townsend

The Battle of Old Hook
Review by JoAn W. Martin

Cory Stone, age seventeen, “not a kid anymore, but not quite
grown either,” is sent by his father out into the thicket to
find the renegade cow Short Cake and her calf. As he follows
the tracks, Cory wonders if the cow realizes that death is
stalking her. He shoots the coyotes with his Winchester and
rescues the bull calf from a pack that has already killed his
mother. The calf shows his appreciation by charging Cory.

Billie Sue and Cory notice each other in high school, but they
have different paths to follow. Cory longs for a Rodeo
Championship. Billie Sue waves between barrel racing and
country music. Each time they are together they realize how
differently they view their future.

Hook’s owner, Bubba, uses Hook’s hatred of Cory to push
him into a wild, bucking bull. Bubba wants to exploit him for
the wild bull ride in the rodeo. Cory’s partner, Hooter, maps
out road trips for Cory and himself, and they hit the rodeo
circuit. Cory continues to repeat his “mantra”—“No bull I
can’t ride!”

Billie Sue wonders if there is a place for her in country music
business. But when Cory is injured in a bull riding
competition, she drops everything to go to the hospital.
Unable to ride until his leg heals, even on crutches, Cory
accompanies the men out to Panther Creek to find the young
bull. The calf has run free for a year and managed to become
best friends with a deer. In spite of Billie Sue’s apprehension,
Cory determines to ride him. Hook figures it is time to get
even and determines to kill every human in sight. Billie Sue
sees Cory in her nightmares trying to ride a fire-breathing
bull with steel horns. In an unbelievable series of events,
Billie Sue’s hit song about a bull takes off, and she and the
bull become celebrities.

Tom Townsend’s strong point in previous novels is his ability
to write from the animal’s point of view. He puts the reader
inside Hook’s head. With just the right touch, we view the
world through the vicious bull’s eyes and feel the emotions of
his love for his deer friend. His hatred for humans exceeds
even his hatred of horses and ropes, deeper even than his
hatred of coyotes: “Humans took away his world and his only
friend, an orphaned fawn. Humans took away his horns.
Quietly, his hatred grew.”

When Hook listens to humans talk as they set up a deer
feeder, he realizes that he has become an urban legend and he
and his deer friend can destroy the feeder and have all the
corn to eat.

(Continued on page thirteen)
(Continued from page twelve) Renny James has done an outstanding cover with shadowy cowboys sitting on the fence at the rodeo, watching an expert rider stay on the bucking bull. The reader can almost hear the crowd yelling, “Ride ‘Em, Cowboy.”

Billie Sue’s song says it best: “A lifetime can pass in one eight-second ride, while true love gets lost in the roar of the crowd.”

June Naylor
Texas Travel Planner
Review by Frances M. Ramsey

As in the previous editions, for each of eight regions of Texas the author describes scenic drives, towns and points of interest, special events, interesting places to stay and where to eat. Side bars and boxes list June’s Favorites, Texas Trivia, Bizarre Texas Stuff, Texas Anecdotes, and other items of special interest. Each section begins with an area map and includes line drawings of sites mentioned. Careful directions for touring each region include routes to follow, places to stop for lunch or a picnic, activities available, and some geography and history of the area. At the conclusion of each regional section, she lists other places to stay or eat in the area. The menus are mouth watering.

The most noticeable difference between the 5th and 6th editions is the increased page size and the print, which is more spread out, but paler. The side bars are larger and more legible. Bold face type for the names of places to stay or eat makes these lists more useful. Close comparison reveals a few establishments no longer listed and some others added. Web sites have been added to contact information, and entrance fees are less specific. The introduction includes a quick reference information about Texas.

Off the Beaten Path is delightful for browsing, for dreaming, for reminiscing, or for planning for exploratory travel in Texas whether a short side trip or a leisurely tour. Recommended for both public and private libraries.

NAYLOR, JUNE. INSIDERS’ GUIDE: OFF THE
BEATEN PATH, 6TH ED. TEKSAS; GUILFORD
GLOBE PEQOT PRESS, 2005. 288 P.
ILLUSTRATIONS, INDEX, MAPS. $14.95 PAPER.

Amarillo: The Story of a Western Town
Paul H. Carlson

Beyond the Songs
Review by Janet K. Turk

Paul H. Carlson offers a comprehensive history of Amarillo’s past and present in Amarillo: The Story of a Western Town. Of course, he mentions the generally recognized trivia of all the songs that pertain to the town, and he reminds readers that Route 66 ran through the heart of the town. Beyond the trivia, Carlson explains that Amarillo is a western town with distinct Midwestern flavor. He notes that many of the early settlers to the area came from Midwestern states such as Iowa and Illinois, “bringing with them social, cultural, and intellectual norms different from those in Texas.”

Carlson explores the evolution of Amarillo and its inhabitants starting with the Clovis and Folsom peoples to the present residents. In addition, he traces the economic changes, how Amarillo survived the Great Depression, what happened to the town in the 1980s, and how the town currently functions. Perhaps the most fascinating chapter is the one entitled “Agibusiness, Oil, and Nuclear Bombs.”

Carlson has thoroughly explored the town and its history; he offers extensive notes and annotations as support for his text. Overall, Carlson shows the evolution of a perceived western town with a clearly cultural focus and how a group of people have made it a successful community. Recommend for all libraries.

A Life on Paper: The Drawings and Lithographs of John Thomas Biggers
Olive Jensen Theisen

Speaking to the Human Spirit
Review by Janet K. Turk

Theisen's *A Life on Paper* presents the life, philosophies, and artwork of John Thomas Biggers. She mentions his entry in to college at Hampton Institute, where Biggers intended to study a trade. However, his encounter with a visionary teacher changed his focus. Biggers left the institute in 1946 “knowing his calling would be to tell the honest story of the Negro in America through his art” (3). He was a gifted African American artist who reached adulthood while the civil rights movement had not yet come to pass. He did not, though, allow the atmosphere of the time period to stifle his creativity. In his own words he confesses, “I began to see art not primarily as an individual expression of talent, but as a responsibility, to reflect the spirit and style of the Negro people” (13).

Theisen had numerous conversations with Biggers during the last thirteen years of his life. She also was welcomed into his studio numerous times. Together, they selected more than one hundred representative works for this collection. Biggers died January 25, 2001 before the book was completed. However, with the help of his widow, Theisen was able to compile this beautiful tribute to a man and his art.

Mexican Light: Healthy Cuisine for Today's Cook
Cocina Mexicana Ligera: Para el Cocinero Actual
Kris Rudolph

A Bilingual Cookbook
Review by Janet K. Turk

Kris Rudolph is a native of Houston and owner of the restaurant El Buen Café. Her cookbook presents the wide knowledge she has gathered over the years about Mexican Cuisine, Aztec menus, and Tex-Mex. Her introductory chapter is fascinating with its explanations of the evolution of the Mexican Cuisine and the Aztec diets found most commonly in central regions of Mexico. Based on the premise that the Aztec diet contains little fat and healthy grains, fruits, and vegetables, Rudolph sought to create healthy Mexican food that reflects the basics used for over 500 years. Instead of focusing on fats and sugars, her recipes highlight the lean aspects of wholesome, delicious cuisine.

This cookbook offers fifty recipes categorized by the following divisions: soups, salads and starters, entrées, side dishes, and desserts. Most recipes are accompanied by healthy eating tips and substitutions. Likewise, all sections contain helpful hints and explanations of the various ingredients. Each recipe also lists total calories, total fat grams, saturated fats, carbohydrates, and fiber. Rudolph even includes dinner party menus, summer brunch ideas and the steps necessary to pull off a large gathering successfully.

Also, the average home pantry is likely to contain all necessary ingredients for most of the recipes. Even the peppers used are those commonly found at most grocery stores. From Lime and Cilantro Soup to Sea Bass in Garlic-Citrus Sauce, this book is sure to please even the most picky cook. Best of all, Rudolph has done the hard work of figuring gram amounts for the products we should be eating and for those things we should be limiting.

*Mexican Light* is Number 3 in the Great American Cooking Series and is recommended for all public libraries.
Civil War to the Bloody End: The Life and Times of Major General Samuel P. Heintzelman

Jerry Thompson

Disgraced General
Review by Janet K. Turk

Thompson claims that if Lincoln could have “unmade a general, perhaps he would have started with Samuel Peter “Sourdough” Heintzelman.” In this comprehensive biography, Thompson traces Heintzelman’s life primarily through his years at West Point to his death at the age of seventy-four. Included in the book are Heintzelman’s early successes and later failures as a military man. One fascinating failure was his inability to protect the Oatman family from Indians after the family sought his protection. By the time Heintzelman’s men showed up, six of the family members had been killed, and two daughters had been kidnapped.

A friend of Robert E. Lee, Heintzelman saw duty in Mexico and established Fort Yuma in California in 1850, mined for silver in Arizona, and led U. S. Forces on the Texas-Mexico border during the Cortina War. He spent the latter part of the war administering prison camps in the Midwest, while his health rapidly deteriorated to the point that he could not walk for weeks on end.

Thompson catalogs Heintzelman’s views on slavery, his mistakes at Bull Run, his interactions with President Lincoln, and his day-to-day life experiences and perspectives on life, family, friends, and honor.

While chapter one is a bit tedious as the foundation of Heintzelman’s West Point years is illustrated, the remainder of the book clearly offers thorough details with a balanced blend of scholarship, details, and narration, which allow the book to be interesting and enjoyable.

Heintzelman kept a personal journal for forty years, highlighting his thoughts, his daily behaviors, and his interactions with other people. Thompson utilized these diaries along with a great many other resources to offer scholars and those interested in the Civil War a more in-depth, even handed perspective on this general who is usually maligned in other historical accounts. Likewise, Thompson clearly illustrates Heintzelman’s broad involvements throughout the South and West before, during, and after the Civil War.

Recommended for all libraries.


Happy holidays from everyone at Review of Texas Books.

Janet K. Turk is a lecturer at Lamar University in the department of English and Modern Languages. She is also co-editor of Review of Texas Books.