

HOG AND SNAKE

NEWSLETTER OF THE GRADY MCWHINEY RESEARCH FOUNDATION

THE GRADY MCWHINEY RESEARCH FOUNDATION IS DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP RELEVANT TO 19TH CENTURY AMERICAN HISTORY, CIVIL WAR HISTORY, TEXAS HISTORY, AND GLOBAL MILITARY HISTORY.

WWW.MCWHINEY.ORG

SOUTH 14TH AND SAYLES BLVD., ABILENE, TX 79697

JULY 2003

HAPPY 75TH BIRTHDAY, DR. MCWHINEY!

FROM THE PRESENT

With the summer upon us, everyone is working hard to make the McWhiney Foundation more visible and self-sufficient. We now have a long range site plan for the Buffalo Gap Historic Village, and it is in the process of being translated into reality. The Press is publishing local history as well as Texas history and continues to feature outstanding nonfiction reading about the Civil War and the South. The McWhiney Foundation's activities help promote Abilene as a great place to live or visit. Proof of our community support comes in the new Roundup Attraction Pass that includes a combined price to the Buffalo Gap Historic Village, Abilene Zoo, Grace Museum, and 12th Armored Division Museum.

FROM THE PAST

The McWhiney Foundation sponsored the Texas Friendly Hospitality Workshop June 5th and 6th. Four participants were certified as instructors of the Texas Friendly Hospitality Program. Depending on popular interest, it will be offered again.

The "Back to the Gap" McWhiney Fundraiser on May 3 was a big success. The Perini Steakhouse provided a delicious meal, and the *Gamma Sigma* volunteers did an excellent job. The tent erected on the Buffalo Gap Historic Village site created the atmosphere of a nostalgic Western evening. Jean Prescott sang her way into our hearts with her ballads and yodeling. Red Steagall captured the attention of the audience as he put into words and music the real life story of the cowboy. As one guest afterward noted, "The McWhiney Fundraiser was a great opportunity for us out-of-towners to see how big-hearted the people of Abilene are."



SPECIAL EVENTS AT THE VILLAGE

Buffalo Gap Historic Village's second annual Buffalo Hunting Program combined the site staff with volunteer living history interpreters. A complete buffalo hunters' camp, like that which could have been found in the Buffalo Gap area around 1874, was on display, and over 126 visitors came to learn about this aspect of the region's history.

The Barbecue Dinner Theatre was also a success. The aroma of barbecue catered by Betty Rose reminded participants of the great outdoors in the West. The Abilene Actors Guild, beneath the natural lighting of a star-studded night, performed Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*. This performance combined the Old Bard with an Old West setting. The Dinner Theatre will be an annual event. Next year's performance will be held on the last weekend in May. A special hurrah goes to Village member Keri Henson for organizing and coordinating this year's activity.

NOR IS THAT ALL...

The Village has grown with the acquisition of new property so that it now covers an entire square block. A new iron fence surrounds the additional land to give a uniform look to

the Village's exterior. New Village signs are in place on each of the corners to identify the site to visitors; there are also new signs for our administrative office along Highway 89 (Buffalo Gap Blvd., the main access route from Abilene).

The McMurry Physics Club under the direction of Dr. Richard Thompson assisted in the reconnection of the site's 1905 telegraph system. The operational telegraph joins the 1905 Railroad Depot with an exhibit in the Village Gallery – a literal "hands on" program for visitors. The next project is to get the period phone system into working order.

The Village vintage baseball team, the Buffalo Chips, formed in conjunction with the McMurry University P.E. Department, plays by pre-1898 rules; and the team dresses in period clothing. Those interested in participating in this challenging and entertaining educational opportunity should contact Kevin Young at (325) 572-5211.

The 1925 educational school program has attracted many fourth and fifth grade classes from Abilene and the surrounding areas. The students have an opportunity to observe and experience the daily activities and curriculum of 1925. The day-long program includes a sampling of Texas and U.S. history, arithmetic, and reading/writing. Individual chalk slates are provided and students are checked for lice (standard procedure in 1925). Lead interpreter Keri Henson is running the program. Class slots were completely booked through April and May. The program is scheduled to resume in the fall.

Three of the site's living history interpreters, Keri Henson, Amy Morgan, and Tyler Barnett took a two-week history road trip with site manager Kevin Young and Foundation controller Gail Young. The trip allowed the staff to visit other outdoor living history sites and museums. These included Conner Prairie, one of the country's premier living history villages; Montecello; Lee Chapel, where Robert E. Lee is buried; Appomattox Courthouse; and the Civil War battlefields at Gettysburg, Antietam, and Franklin (the Carter House). The McWhiney Press had a booth at the Gettysburg Book and Paper Show. The trip was funded through the generosity of McWhiney board member Mike Stevens and Farm and Ranch Health Care. The staff returned with many good ideas and enthusiasm, both of which will be reflected in the changes coming to the Village's Living History programming this fall.

Kevin Young was promoted to be the Village Site Manager on May 10th.

MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

You can become a member of the Buffalo Gap Historic Village and "Capture a Piece of the Historic West Texas Frontier." For the various membership options, call the Village at (325) 572-5211 or point your browser to

<http://www.mcwhiney.org/services/member.html>



COMING ATTRACTIONS AT THE VILLAGE

July 12 to October

The Hot Summer of 1925 – The Scopes “Monkey Trial” as viewed from Taylor County, a special exhibit

September 20

Horses to Horseless Carriages Living History Program

October 12

“Will Rogers at the Gap” in the Courthouse

October 13

“An Evening with Will Rogers” at Perini Steakhouse

October 18

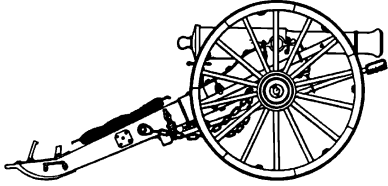
120th Anniversary of the Moving of the County Seat from Buffalo Gap to Abilene

November 8

Veterans’ Day Military Heritage Time Line Event

December 13

Christmas at the Gap



THE MCWHINEY PRESS

In the first six months of 2003, McWhiney Foundation Press published five new titles, reissued one old favorite, and reprinted one of our most popular Civil War books. And we still have three more books coming out before the year is over.

Two McWhiney books and authors won prestigious awards. Dr. Grady McWhiney was presented the Fletcher Pratt Prize by the New York Civil War Round Table for his book *Confederate Crackers and Cavaliers*, published in 2002. Austin historian John R. Lundberg and his book *The Finishing Stroke: Texans in the 1864 Tennessee Campaign* won the Sons of the Confederate Veterans Summerfield G. Roberts Award as the best book on Texas or Texans in the Confederacy. *The Finishing Stroke* came out in January of this year.

Other books published this year include:

The Wings of Change: The Army Air Force Experience in Texas During World War II, by Tom Alexander (\$29.95 hardcover).

On Eagles’ Wings, the story of St. John’s School in Abilene, published for the school’s 50th anniversary, edited by Robert F. Pace.

George Gordon Meade and the War in the East, by Ethan S. Rafuse (\$29.95 hardcover).

Winfield Scott Hancock: Gettysburg Hero, by Perry D. Jamieson (\$29.95 hardcover).

We’ve also reissued in paperback the popular collection of frontier stories, *Tracks Along the Clear Fork* (\$19.95), which sold out in hardcover. And we went into a third printing on

Vicksburg: Fall of the Confederate Gibraltar. Still to come is our special Christmas gift book, *Christmas at the Ranch*, by Elmer Kelton. It should be on store shelves in late August or early September (\$14.95 hardcover) and promises to be our best seller ever.

Also due out this summer is a book we are publishing in conjunction with an art exhibit developed by the Center for Contemporary Arts in Abilene. *Texas Myths and Legends: Stories of the Frontier* by John C. Ferguson (\$16.95 softcover, 8½ by 11 inches in size) should enjoy a long shelf life even after the art exhibit is over.

And the twenty-fifth book in our Civil War Campaigns and Commanders Series will come out this fall – *The Last Stronghold: The Campaign for Fort Fisher*, by Richard B. McCaslin (\$16.95 softcover).

We are already making plans for another ten or twelve Texas and Civil War history titles next year.

McWhiney Foundation Press is part of the Texas A&M University Press Consortium.



ON THE WEB

The Foundation web pages have undergone some major changes in the past few months. Most obviously, we were able to use the special services of Chad Suleimanji, a business/multimedia major at McMurry University, to give a new look to the Buffalo Gap Historic Village sections. These now have a common interface with a lot of new information. The picture section has been completely revamped; there are current photos of all the major structures at the Village, so that a person can whet his appetite for a visit from the comfort of his computer. The long term goal is to have all the main photos linked to further, more detailed, pictures (covering the history of the building in question). This has been done for the Cottonwood School, the Courthouse, the Chapel, the Railroad Depot, and a number of other structures; but much work remains. The main Foundation pages can be viewed from www.mcwhiney.org; one can go directly to the Village pages by typing www.buffalogap.com.

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Grady McWhiney Research Foundation
South 14th and Sayles Blvd.
Abilene, TX 79697
(325) 793-3862