



Arlington Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

JUNE / JULY 2020

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Hours

Fielder House: Tue - Sat 10 am - 4 pm or by appt.

Knapp Heritage Park: Sat & Sun 1 pm - 4 pm

Growing Up in Arlington in the
1940s and 1950s
by long-time resident Fred Cook
(Part 1 of 2)

Arlington had to be the most wonderful place on the face of the planet for a young boy to grow up in during and right after WWII. The decade of the '50s has to be the best times this town has ever seen or will ever see again.

My Early Years in Arlington

I first came to Arlington in 1943 or '44; I don't remember for sure which year it was. My dad was with the Marines in the South Pacific, and my mother had taken a job with the old North American Aviation plant in Grand Prairie. We lived out at Johnson Station, and I attended the third and fourth grades there in the old Johnson Station schoolhouse.

Coming from the Great Plains out around Lubbock, this was a great adventure since the landscape had completely changed, and there were actual trees and creeks with running water that had an abundance of crawdads that could be caught on a string with a piece of bacon or occasional fish that could be seen in the clean waters. You were free to roam the countryside and discover
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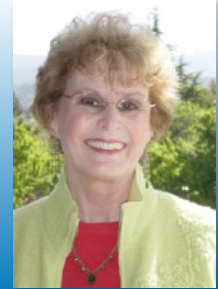
From the Editor
Denise Youngblood

In addition to Fred Cook's "Growing Up in Arlington," this issue features **Jannette Workman** (see p.2) in our "Member Spotlight" series. A longtime AHS board member, Jannette grew up in Arlington and taught Texas history in AISD for many years. She has also contributed short essays on Texas history to the last two issues of the newsletter. If you would like to contribute your memories of life in North Texas as part of "Member Spotlight," please drop me at line at denise.youngblood@uvm.edu.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has not abated enough to launch the Texas Writers Book Club safely. We hope to hold our first meeting on **September 15, 2020, 6:30 pm, at Fielder House**; this will be confirmed in the August newsletter. Please see the April/May issue, p. 1 for a full description of the club; the first book will definitely be J. Frank Dobie's 1941 classic *The Longhorns*. O.K. Carter will lead the discussion.

AHS MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Jannette Workman



How long has your family lived in Arlington? Where did they come from?

Zeta and W.O. Workman, Sr. moved to Arlington from Irving with six of their eight children on June 6, 1944, D-Day. The family consisted of two sons and six daughters including a set of identical twins, Annette and myself. We moved to Arlington because AISD had a better school system than Irving, and my parents were avid supporters of education. They bought a large parcel of land north of Park Row Street and east of Cooper Street.

In 1945, Dad bought the drug store on the southeast corner of Main and Center Streets and renamed it Workman's Drug. Mom was a cashier and I, along with my siblings, were soda jerks. This was my first paying job: 10 cents an hour. Dad had quit his job as a teacher at the North American Plant and at Highland Park High School and operated the drug store. One thing I remember about this period of time is that on Sept. 2, 1945, when WWII ended, people rolled the juke box out of the drug store onto the sidewalk, and everyone starting singing and dancing. It was a jubilant time in Arlington as well as in America.



Where did you grow up? Where did you go to school? Are there any favorite memories of these early years?

I grew up here in Arlington when Arlington was a small rural town of only 4,000 people and where everyone knew everyone else. I went to South Side Elementary School, which was one of the three elementary schools in town. I remember at South Side every May 1 Jane Ellis, the music teacher, organized a May Pole dance and celebration around the flagpole; she also sponsored a play every year. One year the play had a song in it titled "It's Terrible to be Twins, to have the same eyes and chins" and my identical twin sister, Annette, and I got to sing that song. As we sang, we pointed to our eyes and chins. Jane, Annette, and I talked about this for the next 70 years, always pointing to our eyes and chins.

By the time you went to high school, Arlington was growing rapidly. Did this growth affect your life or opportunities as a teenager?

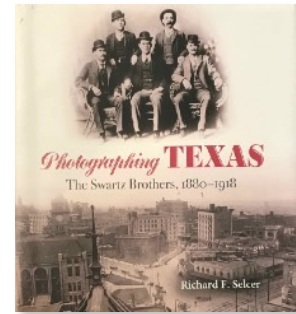
The population of Arlington started increasing in the early 1950s with the coming of the General Motors Plant. The growth of Arlington had a profound effect on the life of my family. Because of this, Daddy saw the opportunity to develop the land that he had bought in 1944. After owning the drug store for six years, Mom and Dad sold it and organized the Park Row Construction Co. He started building beautiful homes on South Oak and South Pecan north of Park Row Street.

He built our large beautiful home at 1433 South Oak in 1951. Mom chose a house plan that
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BOOK REVIEWS ON TEXAS HISTORY

by Denise Youngblood

Richard E. Selcer, *Photographing Texas: The Swartz Brothers, 1880-1918* (Texas A&M University Press, 2019)



Richard Selcer's *Photographing Texas* is the latest addition to a small but growing list of recent photographic histories of Texas, joining the two volumes of *Fort Worth Memories*, published by the *Star-Telegram*, and Bronson Dorsey's *Lost, Texas*, also published by TAMU Press. Selcer, a Fort Worth native specializing in the "forgotten" histories of the West, here showcases the remarkable work of the Swartz Brothers, who were big names in Fort Worth photography for several decades but are now little known, except for John Swartz's legendary photograph of the Fort Worth Five, taken on November 21, 1900, when the gang was temporarily back in town after a Nevada bank robbery. Given that the Smithsonian has named this iconic photo one of the ten most important American photographs *of all time*, Selcer seeks to return the Swartz brothers to their rightful place in history. His well-researched and lavishly illustrated book, which features 200 pages of high quality plates, is a fitting tribute.

The Swartz brothers' story is a case study in the vagaries of professional photography in Texas. Born in present-day West Virginia, David (1854-1919), John (1858-1937), and Charles (1864-1905) were the restless sons of a mill owner. David left home for Dayton, Ohio, where he met an adventurous young woman photographer. They set off for Texas to become itinerant photographers, arriving in Cleburne in early 1879, where they attracted enough business to survive—until citizens discovered that they weren't actually married and drove them out of town. By 1881, now legally married, they set up shop in Columbus, expanding to seven studios in south Texas. But David hankered for "big city" life and in 1884 opened a studio in the middle of Fort Worth's notorious "Hell's Half-Acre" district. David soon invited brother John to join him, and for most of the next decade, David ran the largest and most successful photographic business outside Dallas. David was everywhere, documenting everything, keeping abreast of the latest technologies. But his fortunes took a nosedive in the late 1890s, with an economic recession and a fire that destroyed his studio. By 1900 he was dabbling in this and that, and eventually left photography, becoming best known as a patent medicine flim-flam man, dying alone in Los Angeles in 1919.

John Swartz stayed with David just long enough to learn the business and opened his own studio in Denton in 1888. By 1895, however, he returned to Fort Worth where he ran a studio located at 705-1/2 Main St., where he took the famous photo of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid and their pals. The most naturally gifted photographer of the brothers, John was also known for his honesty as a businessman and his progressive social views. He welcomed everyone's business and advertised in the black press; a few of his portraits of black Texans are included in this volume. But the demand for studio photography diminished in the early 1900s due to the competition from personal cameras, and John sold his studio in 1912.

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(Growing up ..., from p.1)

the pleasures of the Tate Springs swimming hole and the cable swing from the huge cottonwood tree out over the water. You could ride your bicycle all the way into Arlington and go the Texan Theatre and see the first run movies of that time or go to the old Aggie Theatre to see Gene Autry, Sunset Carson, Bob Steele and various other cowboy heroes in the grade B westerns. A quarter would get you into the theatre with money left over for popcorn and a coke. There was also Shorty's barbershop with fifty cent haircuts, which is another bygone era. Now most haircuts cost more than \$10.00. Outside of the natural worry over the safety of my father during the war years, these were two great years of my life that can never be duplicated by any youngster growing up in Arlington. Those days are long gone but thankfully not forgotten.

I attended John A. Kookan Elementary School from fourth grade through the seventh grade, as a lot of people here did. I won't say that we had a bunch of advanced students during that period of time, but there were two brothers who drove dump trucks to school so they could start hauling gravel as soon as school was out. During these years some great and lasting friendships were made with the kids that I grew up with on Mesquite and Elm streets. To name a few, there was Richard Hemmele, better know as "Beetle," Neil Tucker, Burke Beall, Larry DaVault, and Pete Murray, all of whom lived on the North Side. We grew up playing football in Hemmele's yard or in the street. We chose sides, and if your best friend happened to be on the other team, all of a sudden he became your bitterest enemy, at least until the game was over. We all had skinned knees, torn pants, dirty faces, and bloody noses at one time or another. Even though this was a good time for the city of Arlington, in some respects Arlington was still a tough town, and we grew

up tough, in particular on the North Side. We would fight anybody who walked, and if we couldn't find anyone else, we would fight each other. In the fall of the year, Pete Murray, Bob Kirby (who was a Yankee transplant), and I hunted the field with our shotguns out around and north of where I-30 now runs, and over on the old Waggoner 3D property, hunting dove, quail, squirrels, rabbits, or sometime anything else that had the misfortune to move. Larry DaVault and Pete Murray remain as two of my closest friends, but that real bonding came later during our high school years of 1949, '50 and '51 when I and 27 other guys all became "brothers."

The seventh and eighth grades from both South Side and Kookan were all moved to the high school in 1947. At that young but not so tender age, we were exposed to the likes of Tom Wright, Donald Lafayette Wright (better known as "Corky"), Walter Cash, George Parr, Gaither Heartley, and various other characters who went a long way in shaping who I have become today, for better or worse. These, among others, were my peers, who at times seemed to reach hero status. Thankfully, since then I have regained at least some of my senses!

The Beginning of the Making of a Championship Football Team

This is Texas, and high school football was "King" of high school sports then just as it is now and 1949 through the school year of 1951-52 became "the golden years" of my youth. This was the "Age of the Colt" and the making of that fall 1951 state championship team actually started in 1949. Under the coaching of Bill Sheffield and Mayfield Workman, in 1949 we won the first district championship since 1939. We won nine games and tied two, losing on penetrations to the Garland Owls in the bi-district game. We lost some good people through graduation
(continued on next page)

(Growing up ..., from previous page)

that year, notably two all-district tackles, Don Goodwin and Tom Hearndon, and an all-district guard, Marvin Wilson. We also lost Dan Reynolds, the other guard, and our center, Phil Ekholm, and Bob Stevenson, a scrappy little half back.

In 1950 the Colts again won the district, winning ten games and losing none, with Ray "Slick" Glasgow at quarterback, Charley Marshall and Larry DaVault at the halfback positions, and Rusty Gunn at fullback. Eugene Pope and I were the ends, Van Norman and Larry Hufford were the tackles, Grover Cribbs and Jim Miers were the guards, and Pete Murray was at center. We entered the playoffs that year and defeated Newcastle in bi-district at Amon Carter Stadium, Olney in the regional playoffs, again at Amon Carter Stadium. We then went to Commerce to play Mt. Vernon in the quarterfinals, who we narrowly defeated, and then came the Kermit Yellow Jackets who we played in Abilene in the semi-finals. We lost that ball game, as you all know, and the squad members thought it was the end of the world. But coaches Sheffield and Workman knew that those of us returning would rise to

fight again. Off of that ball team, we lost starters Charley Marshall, Van Norman, Eugene Pope, and Jim Miers, all good ball players.

A side note to this season that is worth mentioning is that it was the first year of the train trips between Terrell and Arlington to play the Tigers, who on that particular night, we beat pretty decisively and, believe me, as we found out the next year, they remembered. Along about the third quarter, we ran either a quick dive play or a fullback play over our right guard, Grover Cribbs. When the play was over, and everybody got up and started back to the huddle, we looked around and old number 75 was still on the ground. We gathered around him and could see he was not moving, and his eyes were rolled back in his head. It got kind of quiet in the stands, but all of a sudden you could hear the unmistakable voice of Grover's mother, Pearl Cribbs, as clear as a bell, "Grover Lee Cribbs, you get up from there!" Old Grover must have heard her because I'll swear I heard him say "Yes Ma'am," as he got to his feet, shook like a big old bear and said, "I'm alright, let's go."

(End of part 1)

This Month in Texas History

June

June 19, 1865: Union General Gordon Granger (1821-1876) read "General Order No. 3" from the balcony of Ashton Villa, which still stands at the corner of 24th and Broadway in Galveston. This proclamation informed enslaved Texans that they were now free. Texans of African origins celebrated this day, known as **Juneteenth**, annually in church services, and by the early 20th century commemoration of Juneteenth slowly spread across the South. Today African Americans throughout the United States continue to observe Juneteenth as Freedom Day.

July

July 24, 1958: Jack Kilby (1923-2005), an electrical engineer newly arrived in Texas, **invented the integrated circuit**, otherwise known as the silicon chip, in Texas Instruments' Dallas lab, an idea that lay the foundation for the information age. In 2000 Kilby was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics, arguably the most important of the numerous national and international honors he received for this and other transformative inventions.

(Member Spotlight, from p.2)

would cut down as few trees as possible. Mom and Dad were probably the first Arlington conservationists as they practiced conservation the remainder of their lives. It was at this home that many of Arlington's social activities were held. One of the most memorable of these was Annette's and my 18th birthday party in the backyard. Mom and Dad invited all of the high school seniors, faculty members, and other administrators—around 150 people. We had a barbecue dinner, plus a huge cake, plus Annette and I received a brand new car! As a result of Dad building and selling these beautiful homes, our family was financially able to do things that we probably would not have been able to do otherwise.

Where did you go to college?

Education was important to my parents. Mom and Dad both graduated from East Texas Normal College (later renamed ETSU, now TAMU-Commerce) in 1921, and Dad received his Master's Degree at the age of 61 from NTSU (now UNT). Three years after graduating from Arlington High School, I received my BA Degree from NTSU.

Annette and I attended the University of Texas in Austin our freshman year. I remember that I had to sign an oath that I was not a Communist and every freshman had to take a course in Bible. The tuition at that time was only \$25.00 a semester. Yes, \$25.00 a semester! Three years after I received my BA Degree, I received my Masters of Education Degree from ETSU, the same college where my parents got their degrees. They were proud that I was going to ETSU.

You taught Texas history in Arlington for 37 years. Why did you decide to become a history teacher? Did the way you taught history change over the years?

Actually, when I became a teacher with AISD, the administrators gave me that assignment. I came to really enjoy teaching Texas History, which I taught in five different decades. The curriculum guide changed over the years. Early in my teaching career, I remember that the course was divided into three sections: geography, history, and civics. Eventually, those three areas were integrated throughout the course and not taught as separate sections.

In 1990, I wrote the 7th grade Texas History curriculum guide that the AISD teachers were using. This was the curriculum guide that the AISD teachers were still using when I retired in 1996. (In 1996, AISD gave us senior teachers a buy-out, and I was probably the first teacher to sign that AISD contract. AISD had to pay me to retire!) The longer that I taught Texas History, the more I became interested in it. I did many hours of research, and I even took college courses in Texas History while teaching.

We know from your recent articles for the newsletter that the Texas Revolution is a particular passion of yours. How can you explain the Revolution's enduring appeal? Are there other periods of Texas history that you think people should know more about?

The Texas Revolution was of special interest to me because this period of time was a defining moment not only in the history of the Texas, but also for the United States. As an indirect result of the Texas Revolution, the westward expansion of the United States went all the way to the Pacific Ocean, almost one-third of present-day United States. It was

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(Member Spotlight, from p.6)

during the Texas Revolution that many of our heroes fought and died, and these heroes will be forever immortalized. Schools, counties, cities and towns, highways, etc., are named after these heroes: Stephen Austin, Sam Houston, James Bowie, Davy Crockett, Juan Seguin, Mirabeau B. Lamar, William Travis, James Fannin, and many more. In fact, AISD high schools are named after Texas heroes: Sam Houston, Juan Seguin, James Bowie, and Mirabeau B. Lamar.

Another period of Texas history that is of interest to me is the cattle drives and the ranching industry. The westward expansion of Texas also interests me.

You have been a long-time Arlington Historical Society board member. Why is the AHS important to you?

I became an AHS board member in the late 1990s. I think that AHS is important because we need to keep the history of Arlington intact. There are very few of us Arlington “old timers” remaining, and I want us to preserve the city’s history and educate future generations about the city’s history and background. The City of Arlington has sacrificed some of the city’s history for the sake of development.

What else would you like readers to know about you?

When we moved to Arlington, there were 4,000 people in Arlington. Now the population is close to 400,000. During the early years of Arlington’s growth spurt, Mom and Dad were the “movers and shakers” of the era. They left a positive and long-lasting impact on the Arlington community through their volunteerism. As a result of that, the City of Arlington named a city park after them, W.O. and Zeta Workman Park (6701 Tabor Dr). I spent many hours advocating for this park as a tribute to my parents’ contributions to this city.

Another part of my legacy is the Arlington High School Alumni Association Scholarship Fund. I joined the AHS Alumni Association Board of Directors in 2002. In 2003, I made a motion that AHS Alumni Association give scholarships to AHS graduating seniors. Since 2003, the alumni association has given tens of thousands of dollars to AHS seniors.

My most important contribution to society, however, is the fact that I raised the nicest and most caring daughter and son that a mother can have. Education was important in my own family, just as it was in my parents’ family. My daughter and son both graduated with Computer Science and Engineering Degrees and have done very well in the professional world.

Once I retired from teaching, I started my journey volunteering in Arlington, and I have really enjoyed my volunteer work. I don’t do as much now, but I am still active with the Kiwanis Club of Arlington, the club that my dad started in 1952. I am carrying on the volunteer work that my mom and dad started back in the 1950s and, for that, I am proud.

Downtown Arlington Launches “Roots” Podcast Series

This six-part podcast series may be enjoyed anywhere you listen to podcasts: iTunes, Spotify, YouTube, and Downtown Arlington Facebook Live. Of particular interest to AHS members is Episode 2, “Puttin’ Down Roots,” which features our director Geraldine Mills and local historian O.K. Carter sharing stories of early Arlington.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Although we usually focus on nonfiction history, two noteworthy historical novels set in Texas and written by Texas authors have been published recently.

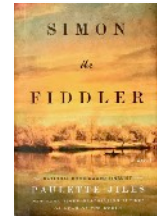
Julie Kibler, *Home for Erring and Outcast Girls*, New York: Crown, 2019.

This unusual historical novel is set here in Arlington, past and present. In 2017 Cate, a new librarian at UTA, discovers a cache of documents in the archives pertaining to the Berachah Industrial Home for the Redemption of Outcast Girls, founded in Arlington in 1903 by Rev. J.T. Upchurch. Cate becomes fascinated by these fragments from the past, and the narrative unfolds through shifting points of view, alternating among the long-ago stories of the women who found shelter at the home, Cate's current friendship with a troubled student, and Cate's recollections of her own troubled life growing up in a small Texas town.



Paulette Jiles, *Simon the Fiddler*, New York: William Morrow, 2020.

This is Jiles' first novel since her critically acclaimed 2016 bestseller *News of the World*, which was a finalist for the National Book Award. Like *News of the World*, *Simon the Fiddler* is set in Reconstruction Texas, but earlier, recounting the chaos and confusion of the first 18 months of military rule. Instead of charting the journey of an itinerant Texas newsreader as in *News of the World*, Jiles here traces the travels of a band of itinerant musicians from Galveston to Houston to San Antonio. A superb writer, with a remarkable gift for description and historical detail, Jiles effortlessly evokes the harsh beauty of coastal and southern Texas at a time of great misery and dislocation. The boy-meets-girl plot may be too contrived for some admirers of *News of the World*, but once again Jiles reminds us that the Civil War did not end on April 9, 1865 at Appomattox Court House. (Jiles' fans may be interested in *Texas Monthly's* May 2020 profile of her, "The Crankiest Writer in Utopia," but as the title indicates, it's not entirely flattering.)



(Book Reviews, from p.3)

For the next few years, he tried to start over, first in Denton, then in Bastrop, back to Fort Worth, and finally, in 1919, in Sulphur Springs. John appears in the 1930 census as a farm laborer in Virginia, where he died in 1937.

Charles Swartz, the youngest brother, did not arrive in Fort Worth until 1893. He stayed with David for six years, specializing in "view" photography, rather than portraits, opening his own studio in 1899. Charles was, however, distinguished as a traveling photographer who rode his bicycle to his customers (quite a novelty). He tackled the Kodak camera craze head-on by offering one-day film developing and supplemented his income in other ways, like joining the *Fort Worth Telegram* (as it was known then) as a staff photographer and selling souvenir postcards of Fort Worth scenes. Despite such inventiveness, by this time the competition was vicious, and Charles struggled to support his family. On October 6, 1905, while on assignment to photograph the Fort Worth Iron and Steel Manufacturing plant, Charles set up his camera on the railroad embankment to get the best view. As the train rushed by, he was hit by its "cow-catcher," dying before the doctor arrived.

Photographing Texas is as much a business history as a history of early photography in Texas, offering a fascinating perspective on the role entrepreneurs like the Swartz brothers played in Fort Worth's development. As importantly, their photographs provide an unmatched pictorial record of the city and its residents at a time of rapid change.