

To the Frontier...



And Beyond!

ALHFAM Mountain/Plains Regional Conference
Abilene, Texas
April 8-10, 2005

The McMurry University Public History Program, the Buffalo Gap Historic Village and Frontier Texas! look forward to welcoming ALHFAM members to West Central Texas for the Mountain/Plains Regional Meeting in April 2005.

The frontier has had a profound influence on American history. Few aspects of life in the United States, and especially life the Mountain Plains region lack some lingering vestige of the frontier experience. The trapper, trader, miner, railroader, rancher and farmer all had their version of the frontier with which to cope. Others lost their way of life as a product of a failed frontier experience, or were forced to adapt as the frontier became increasingly more technologically complex.

Museums and Living History sites frequently address frontier themes. As modern society becomes more technologically complex, they must enter into a new frontier of interpretational techniques to make the visitors' experience exciting.

This conference will attempt to emphasize different interpretations of the frontier, and how the frontier experience can be conveyed to our visitors. Conference sessions focus on, but are not limited to ideas and techniques for interpreting and building upon the frontier experience, and making it relevant to modern visitors. Other sessions about the day to day operation of historic sites and living history programming fill out our schedule.

We hope you'll join us for three days (give or take...) of discussion, workshops, and fun as we examine the issues that affect each of us day to day.

Sincerely,

Bob Wetteman
Conference Chair

Brock Cheney
Mt/Plains CORN Chair

Friday, April 8th ...

Warm-up Workshops

1-5 p.m., McMurry University, Abilene, Texas

“Faux Food,” Kathy Dickson, Oklahoma Historical Society --
Food in historical interpretation can help bring the story to life, but how do you add food to a static display or where the presence of artifacts prevents “real” food from being brought into the environment? Faux food can be the answer. Learn how to make artifact friendly faux food.

“Fashion on the Frontier; or How to Get your Interpreters out of those Awful Pseudo Pioneer Dresses” -- Robin Gilliam-Crawford and Dixie Hoover – A review of the pitfalls and solutions for getting interpreters in proper frontier clothing. In two parts: “Fixing Funky Costumes” and “Making Authentic Costumes.”

Opening Reception

6-9:30 p.m.: Frontier Texas!

Join us for ALHFAM’s traditional “Smoked, Salted and Pickled” opening reception. Meet new friends and renew acquaintances with old in Abilene’s newest historic attraction. Take a high-tech tour through the history of the Texas Frontier, 1785-1885. Please feel encouraged to bring potluck samples of foodways from your part of the country!

Saturday, April 9

9:00 a.m: Opening Keynote Address: TBA

9:30-3:00: Concurrent Papers and Sessions at Buffalo Gap Historic Village, Buffalo Gap, Texas (located approximately 20 miles south of Abilene on Buffalo Gap Road). Papers and sessions to include:

Carol Kennis, “Save our History” – Successful grant writing to take advantage of the History Channel’s new push to save local and regional history. \$250,000 is available, wouldn’t you like to get some?

Brock Cheney, “Tales of Seed and Semen: Stories from our Agricultural Past” -- Cheney will share stories and the history of rare breeds and heirloom seeds to help us think about the role these might play in our daily programming.

Bruce Winders, “Its’ Alive: Living History comes to the Alamo” – Join the historian at Texas’s foremost historic shrine as he explains the process by which living history interpretation was introduced at the Alamo.

Annette Bethke, “Frederick Law Olmstead in Texas” – Discover the opinions developed by Frederick Law Olmstead as he journeyed through Texas between 1853 and 1854, and see how period images compare with contemporary views of the places he discovered.

Bob Brinkman, “Minority Education on the Frontier” -- Learn the origins and development of educational opportunities for minorities (African-Americans, Mexican-Americans, Native Americans, Chinese Americans and Women) in the Mountain Plains region between 1850 and 1900.

Steven Dossman, “Inspection 1853 on the Texas Frontier” -- Revisit an isolated frontier military post with the garrison sentry as he introduces the first stop on a lantern tour of nearby Fort Phantom Hill, circa. 1853.

T. Lindsay Baker, “Windmills and Western Ranching” – An Overview of the use of windmills for pumping groundwater for livestock watering in the American west, with a focus on the southern Great Plains.

Don Frazier, “Discovering Frontier Texas!” – Learn the process by which in idea evolved into an historical attraction that tells the story of an entire region.

Louann C. Jordan, “Spanish Colonial Days” – Provides a look at life on the Spanish Frontier, as recreated at El Rancho de las Golondrinas each May.

Lunch provided on site at “Doc’s Cook Shack”

3:00-5:00 – Opening Day with the Buffalo Gap Chips!

Join the Chips, a vintage 1883 baseball team as they take to the field for opening day. Bring your period attire, or join in as you are as the local nine plays their first game of the season.

5:30-6:30 – Evening Reception, Buffalo Gap Historic Village

Nothing too stuffy here, but plenty of Texas hospitality and a chance to wind down from the day.

6:30 – Dinner at Buffalo Gap Historic Village

Dinner Keynote: Alan Huffines, Historical Consultant to *The Alamo*. “Living History, History and Hollywood”

Sunday, 10 April

Post Conference Events—Linger a little longer and get to know the locals.

9:00-11:00 – Enjoy a guided tour of Fort Phantom Hill, one of the posts on the Texas Forts Trail, with Bob Wettemann, Chair of the ALHFAM GRUNTS, professional interest group. Tour will leave from Ambassador Suites at 9:00 and return at 11:00.

10:00am to 12:00pm – W.K. Gordon Center for Industrial History of Texas, Thurber, Texas (78 miles east of Abilene on I-20).
Come and go coffee and donuts for ALHFAM travelers.
Free admission to Gordon Museum for all ALHFAM members and guests 10:00am to 4:00pm.

Getting there:

Abilene, Texas is located approximately 155 miles west of Fort Worth, TX, directly on I-20. Abilene is also accessible by air, as both American Eagle and Skywest/Continental make numerous daily flights to Abilene Regional Airport. If you choose to arrive by air, please

contact conference organizers, and they will do their best to facilitate your additional travel needs.

Accommodations:

A block of rooms have been reserved for conference participants at the Ambassador Suites of Abilene. Directions and information may be found at www.ambassadorabilene.com.

Ambassador Suites offers a free breakfast to all guests, and we encourage you to take advantage of that offering on Saturday and Sunday morning.

Conference Sites:

Conference events will be take place at three locations: McMurry University, Frontier Texas!, and the Buffalo Gap Historic Village. McMurry University is centrally located in Abilene at the intersection of Sayles Boulevard and South 14th Street. A detailed campus map is located at: www.mcm.edu/cmap/campusmap.html. The Garrison Campus Center is no. 23. A detailed local map will be provided at Registration. Maps to Ambassador Suites, and Buffalo Gap Historic Village can be found at:

www.ambassadorabilene.com and www.buffalogap.com.

On-Site travel:

For those with personal vehicles, we are asking that you provide your own transportation to and from the various conference events. A detailed map of the region will be provided to you at Registration. For those arriving by air, a shuttle will be available, or arrangements will be made to carpool with other attendees.

Be Prepared!

We’re expecting balmy weather, with highs in the mid-70s, to lows in the mid-50s but since we’ll be outdoors occasionally, you may want to bring your winter parka or whatever makes you comfortable. On top of that, if you don’t like the weather, wait an hour or so, and it will probably change. In other words, be prepared for anything.

For questions or bothersome issues, contact:

Bob Wettemann

Director, Public History Program

McMurry University

McM Station Box 638

Abilene, TX 79697-0638

rwettemann@mcm.edu

Registration Form

Name: _____

Badge Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Send Completed Form and check or money order in U.S. funds payment to the
Grady McWhiney Foundation:

Dr. Bob Wettemann
Public History Program
McM Station Box 638
Abilene, TX 79697-0638
ATTN: ALHFAM Regional registration

ALHFAM Member

(Prior to 21 March) \$60.00 _____

Non-ALHFAM/Member/
Late Registration \$80.00 _____

Student Registration \$30.00 _____

Friday Afternoon Workshop: "Faux Food" _____

"Fashion on the Frontier" _____

Friday Evening Reception: Frontier Texas! _____

Meals (included with Registration Fee)

Saturday Lunch:

Beef _____

Chicken _____

Vegetarian _____

Saturday Dinner:

Beef _____

Vegetarian _____

Sunday Morning Tour:

Fort Phantom Hill _____

Transportation:

I will be driving a private vehicle, and would be willing to help
transport conference participants to and from events.

My car will hold: _____