
~~A TEXAN RANGER.~~

A gentleman, just from Richmond, gave the following account of these redoubtable warriors:

Ben M'Cullough's Texan Rangers are described as a desperate set of fellows. They number one thousand half savages, each of whom is mounted upon a mustang horse. Each is armed with a pair of Colt's navy revolvers, a rifle, a tomahawk, a Texan bowie-knife, and a lasso. They are described as being very dexterous in the use of the latter.

HARPER'S WEEKLY – July 6, 1861

Picking up The Tempo a country western journal **a DEXTEROUS NEW VOICE in Country from the ~ Music HALF ~ SAVAGE Southwest**

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PICKING UP THE TEMPO, a country western journal
January 01, 2008, number 10

© 2008, Judy Gordon,
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Introduction: The title of this journal comes from Willie Nelson's song, "Pick up the Tempo." Since I am relocated in Garland, Texas, will attempt to publish this journal on a regular basis first day of each month to seek out new writers and bring back some existing ones.

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Edited and Produced by Judy Gordon

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ROXY WRITES

"Luck"

by Roxy Gordon – © January 2008

[Edited by Judy Gordon]

"LUCK"

George Baxter married a woman named Georgia Dozier and she was a Catholic in a countryside of few anglo Catholics. The Baxters were Catholic and quite a few Germans over toward Ballinger were Catholic, but in Coleman County, anglo Catholics were rare. So when George married Georgia, everyone who knew him admired his luck and his ability to make things work.

The Baxters had luck. George's father, Will, had come out of Travis County in the 80's, owning a good horse, a fair saddle and, at the age of 20, already 6 years of cattle experience. At that tender age, Will Baxter had already driven cows north to the railroad twice and had been a top-hand on a fair size place in the Lampasas country. Now Will Baxter decided to take his cattleman's savy north to the South plains where a beginning cowman might still get rich. Riding north, he spent the night in Coleman Town. He spent the night in livery hay not far from his horse and saddle and at 3 o'clock in the morning a wall of water came crashing down Hords Creek taking the livery and Will Baxter's good horse and fair saddle. Will Baxter thanked his luck for his life.

But Will was stuck 200 miles from his destination with neither horse nor saddle and maybe 3 dollars in his pocket. So he got a job shoveling mud out of a drugstore. After half a day, Will and the drugstore man both decided that form of employment wasn't suited to Will Baxter.

Will cast about for a new job and a man at the courthouse told him that a fellow named Tom Simmons had 25 hundred head of sheep camped out south of town waiting for better weather to drive them down to the Colorado. Will knew Tom Simmons; Simmons had neighbored with Will's family on Barton Creek in Travis County. So Will Baxter swallowed his youthful hatred for wooly sheep and walked seven miles out to Tom Simmons' camp. Tom remembered Will and asked him to supper: "Mutton stew." Tom said, "Coyote got a lamb last night and Jesus shot the coyote, so we figured not to waste the meat." Will had never eaten sheep meat and he never had planned to, but being a young man of good manners, he spooned it down.

Tom Simmons was a one-armed man. He'd lost his arm and his wife and a daughter, killed and scalped, to Big Foot, the mysterious Travis County Indian. "Well, I tell you," Tom Simmons said to Will Baxter after they'd finished their supper, "if you'd a come yesterday, I'd a took you on. But I hard 2 more meskins last night and I just can't use nobody else."

Though the 20 year old Will Baxter wasn't too concerned about his luck or lack of it at that moment, the outside observer might have begun to wonder when exactly it would kick back in. "But I tell you what," Tom Simmons said, "come on down to the river with me and maybe some other outfit will need a hand."

So Will Baxter, without horse, walked thirty-five miles southwest to the very southwestern corner of Coleman County where Tom Simmons established the biggest sheep outfit yet seen in that country. Will never worked for anyone else. For that matter, he never really worked for Tom Simmons; he just stayed. And sixteen years later when Tom Simmons died, Will Baxter the cattleman inherited the whole outfit—which by then had grown to almost three times its original size.

Will was, by then, married to Stella Sherman from the Trapp's Crossing country and they had, by then, a four year old boy named George. Will also inherited the big old limestone house twelve miles south of Talpa, the town that had sprung up where the railroad had crossed the county line. George grew up there, a sheep prince—if there's any such thing—paying little attention to sheep. It was horses George Baxter loved.

By the time he was fifteen, he was the best horsebreaker in the country. There are still people there who've heard from their parents or grandparents how George Baxter and Wes Sewell broke two hundred and five head of horses on a bet one summer for Sid King's big horse outfit on the Concho. "That boy," people said of George, "won't hold onto one acre of the old man's place. He'll be off riding some damn wild horse." George was Will Baxter's only child.

Will drowned in the Colorado one spring morning; Will's luck never held around water. Stella phoned George at Eden where he was breaking horses to sell to the army. He came home the next day and in the six years before he married Georgia Dozier, he almost doubled the size of the ranch. Everybody in West Texas admitted there wasn't a man alive who knew more than George Baxter about sheep. Those were lucky people, those Baxters, people said.

The church business was a little odd, though. Till he was middle aged, Will seemed to practice no particular religion at all. He'd gone to a few Methodist camp meetings and to a few Baptist revivals. But no one could have guessed he was a man beset by

religious questions—and that the Catholic Church would provide his best answer. Will helped build a new Catholic Church in Ballinger and even built a little limestone chapel out behind the big house south of Talpa. He never mentioned his religion to his neighbors and though his neighbors—who were most all Freemasons—discussed it among themselves, they never mentioned it to Will.

If George ever had a religious thought, he kept such well hidden. He did not attend services. He attended ceremonies for his father's death and he married Georgia Dozier in the church. Only at his marriage, did people stop to remember he was Catholic. And then for years to come—for the rest of George Baxter's life as a matter-of-fact—they had little way to forget.

Georgia stayed less than a year in the limestone house. One Friday morning, she bought a railroad ticket for Waco where she had people had left crying on the train while George watched from the springseat of the farm wagon he'd used to bring her and her baggage to Talpa. George never again spoke her name and no one ever knew why she left. No one was surprised that George never mentioned his troubles. The Baxters weren't like other people, everyone agreed.

They were an odd bunch, everyone agreed, but a lucky bunch.

George brought Edna DeLaRosa home a year and a half after Georgia left. He'd been gone to San Angelo on some business, had caught the train early in the week. They came home on the Saturday afternoon train. They got off together in full view of the depot loafers and walked arm-in-arm up the street for the entire town to see. George rented a buggy from Mercer's store to take Miss DeLaRosa and her trunk out to the limestone house and Talpa and the surrounding countryside went into a kind of shock.

George Baxter's neighbors hadn't yet had time to recover from that shock—the shock of one of their own bringing home in full public view, a Mexican woman—when the second and more nearly permanent shock fell upon them. George Baxter didn't plan to marry that woman! Full realization of the evil of the Catholic Church came to his neighbors. The Catholic Church did not allow divorce and remarriage, so a Catholic—such a Catholic as George Baxter at least—might be compelled by his church to live openly in sin. And, good God, with a Mexican woman. No, the Baxters were not like other people.

But surely George Baxter had pushed his luck much too far. George Baxter's neighbors could not even imagine what tragedy must surely wait for him.

What lay in wait was almost two decades of reclusive happiness and apparent prosperity for George and Edna. George went about his business with the same

efficiency he'd always displayed. And, as in most men of his sort, his sense of business and humanity seemed to deepen as he grew into middle age. As his neighbors watched—some disapprovingly, most with a resigned acceptance and even a touch of humor—George just got richer and richer. Everyone in that country suffered the Great Depression, but not only did George and Edna suffer less, he also displayed a generosity that helped a number of his neighbors suffer less. He loaned them money, sold them sheep and grain on credit, and gave them outright handouts.

Through all those years, George and Edna were rarely seen together. He did not attend community functions, but then he never had and neither had his father. As his mother—who continued to live with them—grew older, she began to attend functions in Talpa and was George's representative if need be. Edna regularly bought groceries in Talpa and spoke pleasantly without ever revealing a personal feeling. By the time George and Edna had been together for nearly twenty years, by the late 30's, most everyone had made some kind of peace with their arrangement. Then Edna, who was forty-one years old, got pregnant.

When my father would tell this story fifteen years later, when I can first remember, he would smile a little at this point, telling some outsider how Edna turned up pregnant. It was always an outsider getting the story, maybe one of his old army friends or a friend from the CCC camp before the war. Local folks all knew the story, piece by piece—by heart and soul. My father would smile slightly and say, "Nothing George Baxter did could surprise anybody any more."

But I suspect my father was wrong. As I grew up there and heard sideways talk about George Baxter and his family, I began to think that most people were surprised to near death and shocked beyond scandal. I think some waited for the imminent wrath of an angry God to fall on George Baxter. I think they waited for a column of fire to descend on that old limestone house; I think they waited for tragedy and damnation.

Instead, in the spring of 1939, they got a new addition to the community, a beautiful olive-skinned, black-haired baby girl who melted the hardest heart that beheld her. And in the fall of 1941, they got another addition, this one a boy, but almost identical to his older sister.

And as those children grew, God's wrath was definitely delayed. The girl, who was named Sandra, and the boy, Will, grew effortlessly. They both rode born to the saddle; they both did almost an adult's day's work by the time they were ten. Their

olive skin was flawless as they grew into adolescence. Their heavy black hair was always combed when other kids' fine blond hair blew every-which-way in the West Texas wind. Their shirttails were always neatly tucked in their bluejeans when other kids couldn't keep tucked for an hour. They were quiet and well mannered. Mothers used the Baxter kids as examples to their own kids.

You might have expected other kids to have resented Sandra and Will, but so far as I can tell, no such thing ever happened. They were both enough years older than me that I really didn't know them well, but they seemed to me to be among the most popular kids in school. God knows as a sixth grader, I was totally in love with Sandra Baxter who was a senior in highschool. Our school was all together, you see, with maybe 65 kids in the entire system, elementary, juniorhigh and highschool. I think I still have an idea of beauty first formed from Sandra Baxter's half-Mexican brown skin and black hair.

I remember my parents and other adults saying sometimes how sad it was about the Baxter kids, how they would have to pay for the sins of their parents. Sandra, for instance, would have been rodeo queen in Coleman for sure, had it not been for her parents' sin. God, I used to think, if sin produced someone so beautiful as that, then sin couldn't be half as bad as the reputation it had around Talpa.

Sandra Baxter graduated valedictorian in her highschool class and went off to Texas Tech in Lubbock where she got a degree in elementary education and a husband from Dumas who later gave up his Fort Worth law practice to come back and run the ranch. That was in 1964 when George Baxter suffered a massive heart attack.

Will Baxter didn't do quite so well as Sandra, academically, but he did well enough. And he was absolutely the best football player our school had ever seen. Talpa was football crazy in those days; we played six-man football against other tiny schools in that part of West Texas. Virtually everyone in those little towns would turn out for the games and they took it seriously. Will was a star all four years of highschool. Those middle-aged fans loved him—even though I suspected sometimes they really thought they shouldn't.

And Will could draw pictures. He covered his notebooks and book covers with well proportioned and well executed horses and cows and cowboys and Indians. He drew recognizable likenesses of schoolmates and incisive caricature of teachers. He laughed whenever anyone suggested he might consider a future that would have something to do with his drawing. I don't think anyone ever told me what Will studied in college, but I seriously doubt it was art. Kids didn't go from Talpa, Texas, to art school in those days.

Will went first to San Angelo Junior College and then to Texas A&M on football scholarships. And though everyone agreed he certainly deserved them, scholarships might have gone, everyone said, to somebody who needed them.

Not only did George Baxter own the biggest ranch around, he had now, during the past seven or eight years, profited immensely from a phenomenon new to that part of West Texas. That period, the early to mid-50's is still called the First Oil Boom. And that's what it was.

Independent oil operators—wildcatters—and a few big companies drilled on virtually everyone's places, and while most got a majority of dry holes, George and Edna's place provided almost non-producers. "You know," I heard a roughneck say to another in a Talpa cafe one afternoon, "that old man Baxter's got the damndest luck I ever saw."

Will was a football star at A&M. The pro's got after him his senior year. Not many people at Talpa knew much about pro football yet, but it sure sounded like a good idea—and Talpa was going to have a hometown boy playing. That was pretty high class for a six-man football team—it was, in fact, unheard of. Will graduated from A&M the year I graduated from highschool. Pro offers were reported in the Abilene and San Angelo newspapers. Will came home and spent the summer at local rodeos. Everyone waited to see which team would get him. Then Will spent the winter breaking horses in Arizona.

"Good God," everybody said, "the boy graduated from college and could play pro-ball and he's breaking horses!"

I was a sophomore in college when I happened to see the Austin paper that Will Baxter from Talpa, Texas, had just won the RCA saddlebronc championship. Since I was gone from home, I didn't know what everyone there was saying. I suspect they weren't overly impressed. Rodeo cowboys were never much above trash in that country. And he could have played pro-ball.

Sometimes I'd ask my parents about Will Baxter and they'd know little. He never seemed to see anyone when he was home. He won saddlebronc twice more, skipped a year, won again and then retired with a badly wrecked hip.

I was living in San Francisco when my mother wrote that she'd heard Will Baxter was going to be in a western movie. I saw it at a drive-in in Oakland. He had a semi-major role in a pretty silly western. He wasn't very good. He was arrested for possession of marijuana right after the movie came out. That made the San Francisco

paper and I had a great time telling everyone I know about Will Baxter. I can well imagine what everybody at home was saying. Will got a suspended sentence and married a woman who'd been in his movie. My mother wrote that they'd moved to Tucson, Arizona. She didn't know exactly what he was doing there.

Years passed and, though I told their story at many a bar table, I heard very little about the Baxters. In the late 70's, my mother mentioned in a letter that she'd heard Will had stomach cancer and wasn't supposed to live. I asked her later and she said she'd never heard how he was doing.

I still told his story; I told all the Baxters' story. By then, I was living in Dallas and when I'd tell that story at some lower Greenville Avenue bar table, my friends or listeners would react as if I was telling a good, but not necessarily true, story—or, more often, as if I were speaking a foreign language.

And then, not long ago, the Dallas paper Sunday supplement carried a feature on western art, cowboy and Indian painting. And there was a big color photograph of Will Baxter and blond Hollywood wife in his Tucson studio. Behind him on an easel was a painting of a cowboy driving cows north to the railroad. The caption on the photograph said it was the artist's grandfather, the first Will Baxter—an old-time Texas cowboy, it said.

The piece said the ex-football player, ex-rodeo champion, ex-movie actor was making a name as a western painter. Will's hair was almost totally gray and he looked as if he'd been through some serious illness. But not one hair was out of place and his neatly-pressed western shirt was neatly tucked into his expensive western pants.

The writer wrote of Will's long and checkered career. The writer asked Will how it felt for success to be coming so late in life, and I realized with some surprise that I hadn't seen Will in the flesh for more than twenty years. Will was nearing his mid-40's by now—and I suspected the writer to be, by that comment, much younger.

The writer said Will Baxter smiled and said, "Well, you know, nobody knows how anything will turn out, do they?"

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 (Coming next issue Roxy Gordon's "**Making Sense**," this version, published in Terry Allen's *China Night*, 1985, also included in Peter O'Brien's "*Over The Rainbow*," **First published in Omaha Rainbow 37 – Winter 1985.**)

RANGER RITA WRITES

Hot August Morning by Rita Webb

Hot August morning, funeral procession
Banshee oak trees wailing, crying for his soul
Short life of hunger, bad choices, sorrow
Skateboard in an earthquake, beyond all control

Now all that's left, a broken T-bird bottle
Emerald shards a-glinting in the noonday sun
Amethystic liquid, playing games with language –
Saturn, sauterne, cistern – broke and on the run

Public indifference. Madness unrelenting
While I recall his singing – *Dixie* all alone.
No one would listen, none would stop to help us
Desolate, forsaken, he died there on the stone

Parade of black-clad groupies follows to the graveyard
Sacrificial virgins, now long past their prime
Not sure where they're going, know they can't go back there
Dancing in step to a different beat in time

No more white powder, no more freebasing
It's okay to like him now; he's good and clean and dead
Soul stripped bare and hungry, nothing new for trying
All streets must end where the river runs red

Rita Webb © 2007.

Rita Webb's book, *Cruisin Central* © 2006,
Tonopah Press, Richardson, Texas.

E-mail [Rita](#)

or buy *Cruisin Central* at

Paperbacks Plus Bookstore

6115 La Vista

Dallas, Texas

Phone: 214-827-4860

CAROL GERHAUSER WRITES

© January 01, 2008, Dallas, Texas

MARSHALL PLAN

Sensing this martial law, crimson parallelogram, the effigy of Marx, Catholicism and all Avatars; as with the Twin Towers, lay in waste for a new Virginia Tech massacre that left a frightened herd in Jericho. A certain Don and his Dog wander in a ghetto area already existing today. And the Bad Guys, Cheney (ha), et al, live Underground (Hell?) with the genetic engineers who like themselves, I guess. I prefer anyone or everyone to tell the truth.

Soon Bixie, my carrier pigeon, arrives with news from ANON that Mother West Wind just without the wizard, and brought screamin' Jay Hawkins who had a 100 kids. Ugly is as ugly not only is one man, but 1000's of women, too overwhelmed to use contraception! How humbling the lots the same for all of us copulators.

How about that King Tut—he shall be buried under the pyramid of poverty and abuse. I'll never know a more ruthless American regime. And I heard Abraham's people are getting Iraqi oil! Praise be to Allah in the 3rd place, or is it 5th or 6th...?

MY DEVIATE SEPTUM

It was the best and worst of times—a vagabond and a reprobate lover. They stayed for me for my love. Final showdowns among many led to a breakthrough, but the pickle continued. Chriss' "...Chain Gang" sums it up now. I wanted what was unavailable, of course. Then the derelict following the final betrayal added to the rapsheet. I liked a misguided soul over and over. It led me to an automotive screaming fit and, POW, right in the kisser. How unfair! Drama was the gear I kicked into—to the side of the freeway, running nowhere with the keys as if the police help get rid of a louse. So back in the torture trap, a lot more threats of bodily harm were in en route to the usual. But lo and behold, I looked over, driving, and slugged him as hard as I could back. All returned to abnormal then.

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 Carol Gerhauser provided a collection of her poems entitled "Her Clean Up Days," in *Picking Up The Tempo*, journal – number 3, September 06, 2001. She can be contacted at e-mail Clgerhauser@aol.com.
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OBSERVATIONS OF WILD LIFE, WITH JENNIFER KIDNEY

"Before The Fall" *Collection Of New Poems*

© 2007 by Jennifer Kidney, Norman, Oklahoma

BEFORE THE FALL

The lowering light
of September
makes me anxious
as if my feathered soul
needed to make haste
for the migration.
My heart whirs
like a hummingbird's
wheeling wings.
I crave—yet fear
I'll miss—that last sip
of nectar before
the frost nips
and blossoms shrink
back into the dark.

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end

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Jennifer Kidney was nominated for Oklahoma Poet Laureate,
along with twelve other poets, including N. Scott Momaday
and Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Dr. Kidney's recent book,
Women Who Sleep With The Dogs, published by Village
Books, 2004, is \$10.00, plus in the United States add \$4.00;
for each item shipped to an address outside the United States,
add \$10.00, shipping and handling. Also available limited
quantity of her ***Animal Magnetism***, published by Wowapi
Press, 1985, \$3.50, inquiry.

Available **NEW** book of poetry order from author—***Life List***—
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To order each book, contact:

Jennifer Kidney

1232 Windsor Way

Norman, Oklahoma 73069

Phone: 405/329-3395 or E-mail: jen1kidney@hotmail.com

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ART COELHO WRITES
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Art Coelho,
P.O. Box 249,
Big Timber, Montana 59011

"The Pebble And The Star"

There is a song at the heart of a fragment of inspiration, in one long jagged edge. There are
thousand bloodline harmonies in a kernel of grain isolated and alone in our hand. And when
the unlimited and the immense mirror of the atom, it runs on the fuel of a solitary quest; yet
then why the remoteness of the pebble from the star has so much connection in common.
separate molds within and beyond our touch are only a catfish whisker of infinity apart, and
that bond remains the seed of the earth cooled down into one harmony, in all of heaven's
a cosmos spin, adding its workable heat to the measure of the universe in a unique shape of
unknown, the music out there in space that'll make us sing again like the luck of boxcar boy

— Art Coelho

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(Next issue will have Art Coelho's "A Fishtailing Soul With Nothing To Lose.")
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KAREN X WRITES
PUTT no. 10, 2008 ©

NEW YEAR'S EVE ALL THE WAY TO DAY

Listen to the firecrackers and all the different guns going off!
Police drive down the street, crouching low to keep from catching stray bullets.

Theo shows up with some jerk who wants to tell me all about literature.
Tweaking Theo then disappears with Cary, who leaves him in a dangerous
neighborhood (more dangerous than this one?) without a ride home.

Tweaker elipse
Eliptical worry—what's next?

I even tried zoology to find his abandoned ass.
But oh No! Halt and Newsflash! He's back.
He'd had to walk the whole way home.
Awww! He shoulda lined up with The New Indian vault
and learn totems.
Theo pole vaults—usually only fences.

Whose fault?
Everybody and Nobody's fault.
or San Andreas' Fault—
Whose fault?
No Fault

– KAREN X,
Dallas East Oak Cliff, 1998

KAREN X

Registered Yoga Teacher
and Writer at Large

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<http://hometown.aol.com/kxatlarge/>

WOWAPI PRESS, 1993, published

TENDER BLUE FLICKERS,

by Karen X.

See other connections: [www.priyayoga.net and
Karen X presents: www.wordspace.texas.org],

RICK SIKES WRITES

OLD JIM'S CHRISTMAS PAROLE

By: Rick Sikes © January 1, 2008

A story of morals, for Christmas telling
Of an old convict, who next to me was celling
One hell of a man, that old Jim
We called him "Pops," but all respected him
He'd been in prison since I don't know when
Probably chained to a tree, while they built the "pen"
No one sent him anything, so we gave what we could give
He was old and sick and had sorta' lost the will to live
Christmas eve, he was restlessly walking
I asked him to sit down and we started talking
Hell Son, he said, I've been down the roads rough and tough
Then I went straight, hung it up; I'd had enough
But, you know how it is when you've fell before
Get seen around a place where someone makes a score
Well, that's what happened to me this time
I got railroaded right down the line
I've got something in my eyes, no use lying, it's a tear
I ain't heard from my wife and kids in many a year
But, you know Boy, I got me a goin' home feelin' in my soul
Don't see how, though, ain't a chance in hell for parole
Damndest feeling I ever had; can't understand
Wishful thinking, I reckon of a foolish old man
I guess you know, my home-folk passed on years ago
It even seems if I was home, they'd be there too
Just like old times watching the children play
Home is the sweetest place on earth on Christmas day
That's something you remember now, don't forget
I don't see no way I could get home, but it may work out yet
Best wishes to you Boy, I'm tired, gotta' go to bed
The next morning Old Jim did go home; they found him dead

RHYTHM REBEL

Rick Sikes

900 N. Neches

Coleman, Texas 76834

Phone: 325/625-5014

Rick Sikes' CD's For Sale

© *Etchings In Stone*

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Rhythm Rebel, © by Rick Sikes' chapbook,

published by **Wowapi Press, 1996, 2001**, inquiry.

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PETER O'BRIEN WRITES

"The Night Bill Haley Came To Town"

by Peter O'Brien © January 01, 2008, Surrey, England

THE NIGHT BILL HALEY CAME TO TOWN

I'm looking back remembering

the singers and the song.

Bill Haley and Bob Dylan,

The Everlys, Phil and Don.

Unlike the technicolour world of the USA,

England in the 50s was drab and charcoal grey

until the kids began to talk in a most peculiar style,

"See you later, alligator." "In a while, crocodile."

Bill sang "Rock Around the Clock" in the film, *Blackboard Jungle*.

Became a teenage hearthrob though he looked more like your uncle.

Then the Comets came to London on the Rock 'n' Roll Express.

Hit the stage at The Dominion, couldn't fail to impress.

Played forty-five minutes, never heard anything so loud.

Couldn't hear the music for the reaction of the crowd.

I'm looking back remembering

the singer and his songs.

Don't you wish you'd been around

the night Bill Haley came to town?

We'd been hearing about this kid, there'd been a lot of talk.

Come from Minnesota to the folk scene in New York.

He wrote a dozen songs a week, he wasn't just a hack.

Sounded a lot like Woody, or maybe Ramblin' Jack.

I remember the poster with printing black on red,
"Composer of Blowin' in the Wind," is what it said.
I've still got the programme, cover photo black and white.
Forever young Bob Dylan took the stage alone that night.
Stood underneath the spotlight, a single microphone,
just voice, guitar, harmonica, like playing in your home.

I'm looking back remembering
the singer and his songs.
Don't you wish you'd been around
the night Bob Dylan came to town?

Don and Phil made gold records, I was still attending school.
Jukebox played Bye, Bye Love while I followed the golden rule.
I loved that 45, nothing about it not to like.
Saw them play years later, the two of them and father Ike,
but the road, one night stands and the years took their toll,
went their separate ways, turned their backs on rock 'n' roll.
In September '83 they were back in harmony,
singing their hits from The Price of Love to Let It Be Me.
Alone among the audience that memorable night
I was seated in a cafe in the jukebox neon light.

I'm looking back remembering
the brothers and their songs.
Don't you wish you'd been around
the night the Everlys came back to town?

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end

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Peter O'Brien is an author and publisher, *Omaha Rainbow*, and under his
Sun Storm Records, launched Roxy L. Gordon's music.
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ROY HAMRIC WRITES

CLOSE

Bring close far
as if near
in appearance only
Look straight

don't confuse
the precision
with seeing
Imagine for convenience
you're there but it isn't

===

end

Roy Hamric was the editor of the former weekly newspaper, *The Desert-Mountain Times*, in Alpine, Texas. He edited a collection of newspaper columns, *Archer Fullingim: A Court Editor's View of Life*, which won the Texas Institute of Letters best work of journalism award in 1976, and he took the photographs for *The Big Thicket*. For many years, he took photographs which regularly appeared in Wowapi publications.

RENATA YOUNTS WRITES

"A Child Was Left Behind" for Courtney

by Renata Younts © January 01, 2008, Dallas, Texas

a child was left behind

for Courtney

a child was left behind
double-bagged in a dumpster
in the back lot of a veterinary clinic
a woman thought she heard a cat crying

a child was left behind
at a city pool on a daycare field trip
a lifeguard noticed her
her caregiver didn't count to twelve

a child was left behind
he slept overnight
on a school bus
in a parking lot full of empty busses

even the Prez has a plan
he calls it "No Child Left Behind"
yet his policy for education
leaves Texas children dead last

a generation of latchkey kids
grew up into adults
swearing, "not my child!"
yet many are deadbeat dads

but there are deadbeat moms, too
a child was kidnapped by a car thief
when her mom left her behind – *just for a minute* -
to buy a Lotto ticket at 7-Eleven

and deadbeat granddads
CPS took a child away
when his granddad left him behind – *just for a minute* –
to run inside Wal-Mart for a coke

there are undeserved happy endings
lessons not learned
but every summer
a child or two or three
is left behind in a locked car
in 100 degree weather
and another stone angel stands guard
over a shaded lot

a three year-old child was left behind today
alone and scared
in a shopping center in Maryland
her name is Courtney
that's all anyone knows

RENATA YOUNTS, *author and Japanese American, was brought to us from Karen X at WordSpace, a current series of poetry readings, at PaperBacks Plus, 6115 La Vista Drive Dallas, Texas 75214. Enjoyed Renata Younts on December 9th, 2007.*

Contact her at: renatayounts@hotmail.com for products and readings.

WES MCGHEE WRITES

Blue Blue Night

"Texas #2" – Part 1 – Talpa and Part 2 – 25 Years On

by Wes McGhee – © January 01, 2008, England, Great Britain

"Texas #2" – Part 1 – Talpa

Roxy: Write the thing down before it's all gone.

Roxy: Grandma Bodell, my Great Grandmother, got married when she was fourteen, she was Choctaw Indian, come to Texas in a covered wagon.

Grandma: ... Soon as that tree fell into that tank, us kids got in that tank. ... and I got a big ole footboard and I lay across it and kicked ... well, it floated out from under me one day and I went to swimmin' ... and that's how I learned to swim, that ole board floated out and I just went off ... and we went on that trip to Arkansas and Missouri and all in there, I said I was gonna go in every river, but oh I was young then ... So we stopped at a lot of 'em and well, we stopped at one river in Missouri and I said, "Well, I'm gonna swim every day" ... Well, it was runnin' and I got in it, and I swam down the stream and I thought "ooh I've improved on swimmin' goin' down the stream" ... but when I started back I hadn't improved a bit!

Roxy: And then ... there's when ... everybody in Talpa got arrested. ...

Grandma: He'd call after lessons, you know, after school, and told me, he said "Grandma, always have me a great big ole bowl of potato fries." And I did, didn't I ... he'd come back and he'd eat potatoes and ketchup. ... always wanted potatoes.

Grandma: Granpa tried, we couldn't get him to look at a thing, we'd try to see somethin' pretty and he wouldn't look at it. ... he was drawin' ... he had art on his mind then.

Roxy: So Grandma Bodell made butter, raised chickens. Took the farm wagon to town to sell butter and eggs. In the late twenties she'd always bring home a Jimmie Rodgers record.

"Texas #2" – Part 2 – 25 Years On

Up here on Bead Mountain
Time stands still.
It ain't much of a mountain
It's just a little hill.
But the ghosts of West Texas
Cry out across the plains
Long gone Comanches
Long freight trains.

Close my eyes, I still see Judy
Ridin' like the wind,
Hear Roxy telling' stories yahoed will never end
And Grandma tellin' how she came out here by wagon
train
And since they brought the highway through,
It ain't been quite the same.

Every year about this time
The Cleechie pit runs dry
And me – I'm killin' beer cans
with a --- .45
I got 'em all lined up
Along a dried out mesquite bough
And Roxy says "By god, Wes!
That beer can's gotta be
The safest thing in Texas ... right now!"

Chorus

So – so long Louise, rest easy Roxy.
Your words will live forever, on the West Texas wind.
Say Hi to Townes and Doug and Dale
And keep that campfire burnin'
Keep that campfire burnin', until we meet again.

Up here on Bead Mountain
I'm lookin' back.
I remember ridin'
In that long red Cadillac.

I can still hear Grandma's voice
And the stories she'd recall,
Like how she'd seen Cole Younger once
In the Talpa general store.

Chorus

Up here on Bead Mountain
Staring at the sky.
Sometimes time can just stand still,
Sometimes it just flies by.
Now the campfire's down to ashes
And the nights are long and cold
And there's only me and Judy,
Wonderin' how we got this old.

Chorus

So – so long Louise, rest easy Roxy.
Your words will live forever, on the West Texas wind.
Say Hi to Townes and Doug and Dale
And keep that campfire burnin',
Keep that campfire burnin', 'til I see y'all again.

And they all loved Jimmie Rodgers
They all loved Western Swing.
Drive for miles on a Saturday night
To hear Tommy Duncan sing.

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end

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WES MCGHEE produced *Blue Blue Night*, recorded and mixed at
Glebe Studio, Great Hillingbury, Bishops Stortford, Herts—CM227TY,
England, Great Britain, [contact: wes.mcgee@hotmail.co.uk]—[All
songs Wes McGhee—Bug Music.]

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JUDY GORDON PAINTS

#800

NDN, 1971 – Mow-way (Push Aside), media: acrylic on canvas, date: 1971,
dimensions: 7½" x 9," current whereabouts of original: Private Collection, Garland, Texa:

Judy's comments:

Have this original painting in Garland, Texas. Subject for this painting was my imagination. Added certain items to make it look Indian, like a bear claw braided on top of his head, as a single braid, laced into his hair. Also provided a shell necklace for him. Black background canvas stapled onto a board, tightly fitted. Black also brings up nicely the painted face, and reveals nicely the painted brush strokes.

All prints 8½" x 11," archival matte paper available.

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end

(Next issue will have Judy Gordon's "*Red Armed Panther.*")

ENTERTAINMENT

#100

LISTEN TO JAZZ RADIO SHOW By **ROGER BOYKIN**, Every **SUNDAY EVENING, 3-6 PM—KKDA Radio Station 730 AM, Dallas, Texas.**

ROGER BOYKIN: Here's my itinerary: **Dec. 31st** at the African American Museum, **Feb. 22, 24, 26, 28,** and **March 1st** at Music Hall (in the Dallas Opera production *Porgy & Bess*), **March 5th** at Sammons.

#200

Last **Fridays** of every Month at **7 pm:** The Priya Yoga Studio **Contemplative Open Mic and Reader Series**, coordinated and hosted by **Karen X**, sponsored by **WordSpace**. (www.wordspacetexas.org), 6337 Prospect, Dallas, Tx. 75214. 254-495-9976 for more info. January features **ALICE TYLER**.

Open Mic: 3 poems or 5 min.— whichever comes first.

#300

By Way of Vicki Meek—THE SOUTH DALLAS CULTURAL CENTER--13th INTERNATIONAL THEATER FESTIVAL, FEBRUARY 1ST-9TH, 2008, contact her.
ALL EVENTS: msart55@yahoo.com.

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end

FOLLOWING CD REVIEWS:

BOB LIVINGSTON: *Original Spirit*
*by Judy Gordon**

1. "Prelude," (Livingston/Watkins), *gets us ready to go; wait for it—it's a-coming,*
2. "Original Spirit," (B. Livingston/I. Livingston), *strong flow / takes us to the other side*
3. "Mahatma Gandhi & Sitting Bull," (Livingston/Bridger), *good companions*

bringing worlds together,

4. "On A Dream With You," (Livingston), *gentle flow, this is just downright pretty,*

5. "Take Advantage Of Your Chances," (Livingston), *up-tempo on this one—you ain't sitting still—oop-a-loo-loo,*

6. "I Believe It," (Livingston/Wood), *no lies here, not without Ponty Bone,*

7. "Cowboys & Indians," (Livingston/Bridger), *the Land is truly touched—a true coup,*

8. "Love Cannot Be Broken," (B. Livingston/I.Livingston), *always this one will help us,*

9. "Raining For So Long," (Steve Martinec), *a lightnin' bolt & over-flow creek banks or one, but we'll get out of mud with Bob and his band,*

10. "The Prophet Said," (Livingston/Wood), *keep a look out for those signs—they are there—listen to Livingston and his band,*

11. "Wildness Song," (Livingston), *another up-tempo, takin' this walk—and you get there—solidly right there,*

12. "When The Beat Was Young," (Livingston), *way-down-low—heavy-duty—whoo—ah—we take off!! NO DOUBT HERE,*

13. "A Slight Breath," (Livingston/Watkins), **THEN WE CATCH IT—THEN LET A L**

14. "Cowboys & Indians Return," (Livingston/Markham), **YEP, BACK TO IT,**

From Lost Gonzo Band (1991 & 1995)

15. "Geronimo's Cadillac," (Murphey/Quarto), *history always hit us—there's a place—this one still does it!!*

16. "Rendezvous," (Bridger), *this one never forgotten—horse history comes around,*

17. "Friends," (Livingston/Wood), *rinky-dink—IMMEDIATELY!!*

18. "Prairie Madness," (Rick Fowler), *sometimes it can sneak up on you—and hard to handle—THE "IT" VARIES,*

19. "Isabella," (Riley Osbourn), *moments are shared,*

20. "Silent Dancer," (Livingston), *not being afraid to get there, we all approach it,*

21. "Sleepy Train," (Wood/A.Hirschprung), *a gentle way of going home, A LOT NOT FC*

From Cowboys & Indians Show (2007)

22. "Cowboys & Cowgirls All Over The World," (Livingston/Bridger), ***THIS SONG WIL ALWAYS BE UP-TEMPO—WHOLE BAND HANDLES IT—AH-HUH!!!!***

[Contact: BobLivingston.org or MySpace.com/BobLivingston, or Bob@TexasMusic.org – www.TexasMusic.org]

JOSH ALAN: *Josh Alan Band*
by Carol Gerhauser+

Allah, bless his Heart; Josh Alan amazes me (Renaissance some may

say, but what else can a white man do?). So let me begin with #s 10, “Billionaire of the Blues”, and 11, “As Chanukah Passes Me By”, and verify his tongue in cheeky calling; I hate sycophants and miss MYthology, too (the scream is so 80’s cool)! Lyrically the originals score: like “No One Owns the Blues”—not the Big Easy nor Chi town and certainly not Austin (where is that exactly?); and “Mean Town Blues” (I love Johnny’s mo’) and “Her City” turn me on—MY microcosmic domicile of DISPARITY. Fathead should be there and IS (and hail B. Wright for that lick).

I had heard “When a Poor Man gets Rich” (“tant pis” in the reverse, I say, and, oh yeah, the House is mine) and “Strike a Match”, a cute L & S 50’s ditty, on KERA 90.1 in 1999 or so (more folky than jazz), WHICH brings me to the last two originals (tell me, whom is all this eclectricity fo’?). “Honey Dripper” (part 2?) is not bad (is this another of Brian’s jams?), and “Josh’s Breakdown” is real good (who didn’t like Leo Kotke?), but still the CD sez file under Blues. The blues cut I see is Muddy’s “Rollin’ and Tumblin’”, a rhythmically less-challenging version of Robert Johnson’s “biscuit roller” song. And last and definitely not least is Bobby Zimmerman’s “Hwy 61 (re-revisited)—the song rocks, but do you know the title’s story? I do.

[Contact: www.joshalan.com]

[Josh Alan Friedman, P.O. Box 720523, Dallas, Texas 75372]

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ROXY AND JUDY GORDON PRODUCTIONS – PLEASE VISIT ROXY'S WEBSITE.

1. ***TOWNES ASKED DID HANK WILLIAMS EVER WRITE ANYTHING AS GOOD AS NOTHING.*** Now available on CD #100. All songs written by Roxy First Coyote Boy Gordon © 2001, the Estate of Roxy Gordon. All music production by Wes McGhee , © 2001, Bug Music \$15.00 CD.

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6. ***BREEDS,*** by ROXY GORDON © words & artwork, 2001, the Estate of Roxy Gordon \$10.00 book, #3700, 66 pgs.

7. ***SOME THINGS I DID,*** by ROXY GORDON © 1971, Encino Press, 127 pgs. See Amazon to order.

8. ***WOWAPI: ANYTHING WRITTEN IN ANY FORM,*** by Judy Gordon, poems, drawings and photographs, now available Wowapi Press Chapbook, 2007, #4A \$10.00.

9. ***THE ART OF JUDY GORDON,*** by Judy Gordon, all prints are on 8½" x 11" archival matte paper, \$30.00, plus postage and handling.

10. ***LIVING LIFE AS A LIVING TARGET,*** by Judy Gordon, poems and drawings, a chapbook published by Marquette Herring, Editor-Publisher, **PAPERBACKS PLUS PRESS, 1987;** limited quantity available.

11. ***PICKING UP THE TEMPO, a country western journal,*** current or back-issues. Go to Roxy Gordon's Website to find **ARCHIVES – www.roxygordon.com.**

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