The Texas Jack Scout

Volume XIV, Number 2 Spring 1999

Texas Jack's Western Nephew, T. C. Wohlbrück II

Theodor Wohlbrück camping in California

. . . continued on page 2

by Harvey B. Willard

Texas Jack Omohundro had a nephew, Theodor Clemens Wohlbrück II, who shared his uncle's great love of the West with all its grandeur. Theodor was born from the union of Texas Jack's sister Arabella Omohundro with her first husband, Theodor Clemens Wohlbrück I, who was born in St. Petersburg, Russia of German parentage, and immigrated to the United States by way of Weimar, Germany in 1859. A merchant

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Texas Jack's Western Nephew

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living in New York City, Theodore I found his way down to Palmyra, VA where he married Arabella on June 17, 1869. Theodor and Arabella had five children, four girls, followed by Theodor Clemens Wohlbrück II, born August 11, 1879. Sadly, Texas Jack died when Theodor II was not quite a year old. Texas Jack's influence may have been transmitted through Arabella and their attendance at Buffalo Bill's Wild West Shows.

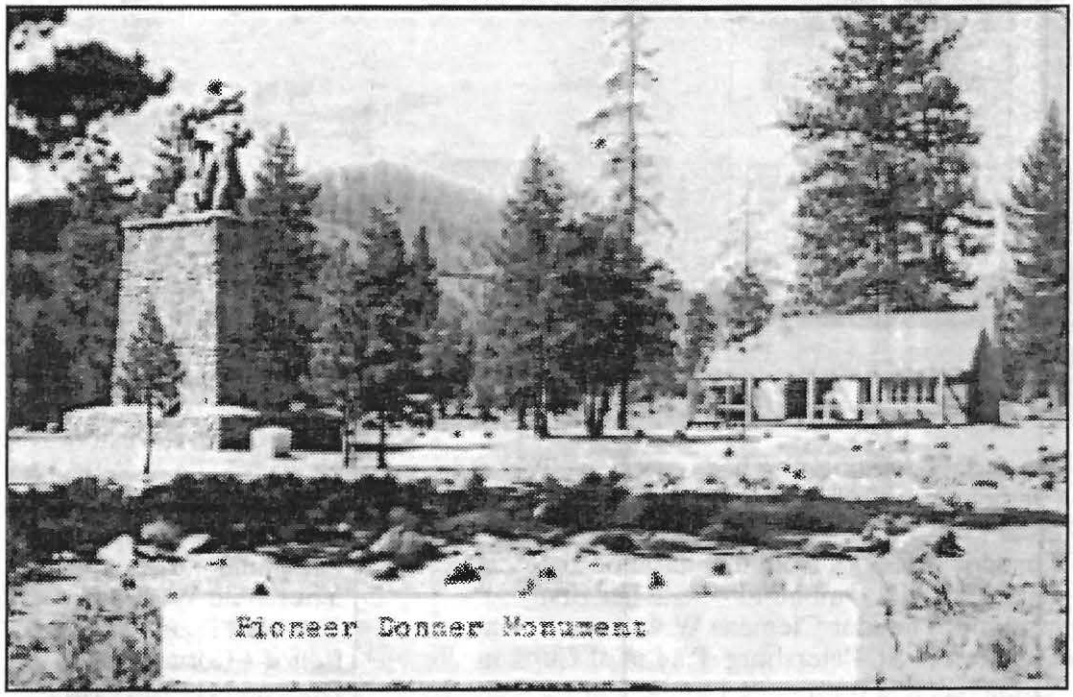
As a young man Theodor Wohlbrück II worked at the New York World Telephone Company. Perhaps as a hobby at that time he learned the art and techniques of photography. After moving to Worcester, MA, he married Mabel Louise Brown. Theodor soon set up his own professional studio of photography. He specialized in "high grade group, flashlight and portrait photography." A large part of his income came from his highly successful group photographs of school children, grades 1 through 12. The annual taking of group class pictures in the public school systems was in vogue from the early 1900's until World War II. Theodor inspired the children to wave after wave of laughter as he busied himself setting up the early cumbersome photographic equipment used for such group photos.

Theodor and Mabel divorced and he wandered around much of the United States before settling in California. There he continued his successful career of photographing school children, roaming the state from north to south during the school year. During the summers Theodor Wohlbrück explored and photographed the natural parks and wonders of California, usually attired in khaki clothes. He became particularly interested in the Lake Tahoe area, still one of the most beautiful recreation areas in America. This is where he decided to set up lodges at Emigrant Gap and Echo Summit Lake.

Many of the early emigrant oxen-driven covered wagon trains to California passed through Emigrant Gap north of Lake Tahoe near Truckee, CA. The Donner Party was stranded there in October 1846 by early blizzards. Of that group of almost 90 men, women, and children who pitched camp there, only 48 survived the winter. Dr. Charles Warren Chapman, a Nevada City dentist, led a drive to erect at the Donner site a large bronze monument to the pioneer emigrants to California. This Pioneer Monument, the largest statue (18 tons) made at that time west of the Mississippi, was dedicated June 6, 1918. The sculptor was John McQuarrie of San Francisco. This commanding statue shows a pioneer and his family, hand shading his eyes, facing the mountain that needed to be passed, leading his wife and their baby, with an older child clinging to his boots.

Theodor Wohlbrück actively assisted the California native sons and daughters in this project. He set up and served as the genial host at a small museum and service canteen named Pioneer Lodge, located near the Donner Monument. Theodor ran his lodge at the monument during the summers from 1918 until about 1928, when the monument and grounds were given over to the state of California.

Pioneer Lodge is no longer there. Instead the 353 acre Donner Memorial Park has the



Pioneer Monument and Lodge at Emigrant Pass, California.

Emigrant Trail Museum, completed in 1962, located in the same position relative to the Pioneer Statue. This museum has exhibits on the Donner party, construction of the first transcontinental railroad, and the geology, wildlife and Indians of the region.

On July 3, 1921 Theodor Wohlbrück opened a small resort, Echo Summit Lodge, near Echo Summit Lake at an altitude of 7300', which drops 2000' in 3 miles to the southern end of Lake Tahoe. (I went back to visit Lake Tahoe in the Spring of 1993. Echo Summit Lodge is still there, much as it must have been in the 1920s. It is now owned by the California Alpine Club. They have left hung on the walls many photographs of that area taken by Theodor Wohlbrück).

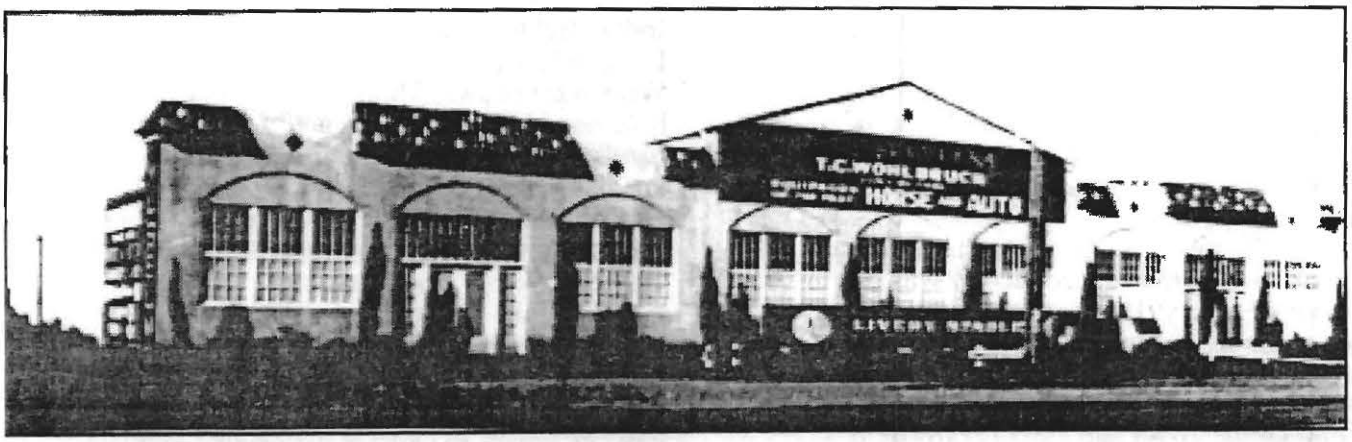
Theodor Wohlbrück learned much about the West from his best friend William Paden, Superintendent of Schools for Alameda, California, who was a well-known historian and contributor to the Bancroft Library at the University of California at Berkeley, specializing in western history.

Theodor collected with great zeal antiques and other memorabilia of the old West, particularly stage coaches, wagons, and early motor cars. He also collected western furniture, ore specimens and valuable tapestries and paintings. By 1930 Theodor's collection of old cars, coaches, wagons, etc. had grown to the point he needed to warehouse them. This he did at his Horse and Auto Museum located at 2414 Highway, Redwood City, California, which he later moved to San Jose between October 1935 and early 1936. It was never opened to the public. Theodor asked the state of California to build a museum to display this priceless collection of horse-drawn vehicles, early motor cars, and antiques, but they declined.

Four days before Theodor Wohlbrück's death on 28 November 1936, he signed an agreement to have the Henry Ford Museum at Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan, purchase his collection of some 260 items: 152 carriages, coaches and wagons; 60 motor cars; 7 mounted heads of horses; 40 harnesses and a harness rack. This collection included Senator George Hearst and Leland Stanford family carriages, a Mark Hopkins hunting wagon, a Bailey buggy, a Sullen coach, a ladies Victoria, a 'vis-a-vis' tallyho trap, and numerous wagons, carts, phaetons, Concord stages, covered wagons, mail coaches, hearses (1860), harnesses, saddles, and western guns. The collection also contained 60 motorized vehicles, the prize being a Mercedes auto built in 1913, private car of Crown-Prince Wilhelm of Germany used on the Eastern Front during World War I. Included were a number of early electric cars (1900), Stanley Steamers (1907, 1912), Hupmobiles (1908, 1913), Maxwell (1907), Reo (1907), Fords (1903), Studebaker Garford (1906), Franklin (1910), Pierce-Arrow (1915), Buick (1908), Renault (1910), and more. It took thirty flat cars to transport the collection to Dearborn. Some of the pieces in the Ford purchase were later sold off by the museum, but several fabulous vehicles are still on display at Dearborn.

Of Theodor Wohlbrück it was said in his San Jose Post newspaper obituary "he was more Californian than the most 'died in the wool' Californian with historians and collectors calling upon him to pass judgment on specimens, or to supply genealogy." He was my grandfather.

(My thanks go to my cousin, Russell F. Bath, also a grandson of TCW II, for some of the information in this article).



T. C. Wohlbrück Horse and Auto Museum at Redwood City, California

died in captivity, and the United Sates government, terrified of another Indian war, ordered the unpredictable Pawnees back to their reservation.

"Undaunted, Colonel Barnett trekked on to Kansas City, where he sought out the famous scout, Indian fighter, and federal marshal James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok. With his shoulder-length hair, drooping moustache, and reputation as a gun-fighter, Hickok was just the man to manage the exhibition the Barnetts planned for Niagara.

. . .

"The Great Buffalo Hunt was scheduled at last for August 28 and 29, 1872. "No expense has been spared," the advertisements announced, "to make it the most interesting, the most exciting, and the most thrilling spectacle ever witnessed east of the Mississippi" - hyperbolic phrases reminiscent of those that had once been applied to the great cataract itself. Members of the Sac and Fox Indian tribes had been engaged to appear in full war costumes, mounted on fleet ponies from the plains. A Mexican *vaquero* troupe would also participate. Special excursion trains would run to the Falls, and there would be seats for fifty thousand spectators.

Niagara Falls
MUSEUM.
Near Table Rock.

The Proprietor, most grateful for the liberal support he has

AN ENTIRE FOREST SCENERY,

QUADRUPEDS,

RATTLE SNAKES, AND A NUMBER OF BIRDS AND ANIMALS ALIVE.

THOMAS BARNETT.

"Alas, when the great hunt was launched, only three adult buffalo and a calf were still alive to be hunted, and only three thousand spectators turned up to watch. Wild Bill, mounted on a small mustang, loped about after a cow, which had to be goaded to desperation before it would run at all. The show was a fiasco. Barnett's losses came to twenty thousand dollars.

"He struggled on in the face of mounting debts, but his days as a Niagara entrepreneur were over. In November 1876, he sold his four buffalo to an agent of P. T. Barnum for seven hundred dollars. The following year his museum and all his other buildings went on the auction block to satisfy his debtors."

There are some discrepancies between Eugene Wolfe's account and that of Pierre Berton. To begin with, Wolfe says this show took place on July 20, 1870, while Berton puts it in August of 1872. I believe the earlier date is the correct one.

Though Barnett's and Hickok's initial efforts to stage a Wild West show may have been unsuccessful, the Wild West show was an idea whose time had come. We know that "Scouts of the Prairie," written by Ned Buntline and first staged in 1872 in Chicago, was a success. One is led to wonder whether Barnett's ideas influenced Texas Jack, Buffalo Bill and Ned Buntline as they developed their show. And after Ned Buntline left the company, Hickok was induced in 1873 to give the Wild West show another try when Cody and Omohundro staged "Scouts of the Plains."

Thomas Barnett's son Sidney, the man responsible for contacting Texas Jack and acquiring animals and actors for the Niagara Falls show, left papers which are in the Ontario Archives and are probably worth a look.

• • •

M. H. Omohundro, Jr. with Margaret Thatcher at a College of William and Mary reception.
1997 photo supplied by Julie Greene

In Memoriam

Malvern Hill Omohundro, Jr.

The Texas Jack Association lost another one of its own with the passing of Malvern Hill (M.H.) Omohundro, Jr., on 22 February 1999, in Richmond, Virginia. He was buried in the Omohundro family plot in Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond.

M.H. was born in 1905 in Richmond, Virginia, the son of M.H. Omohundro, Sr.,and nephew of J.B. "Texas Jack" Omohundro. He grew up on the family farm, "Brightly," in Goochland. He served in World War II, and was active in the real estate business in Richmond. In 1980, he founded the Texas Jack Association with Frank Sullivan, and continued as an active supporter and chairman of the organization. M.H. was a generous philanthropist to numerous historical organizations, including the Virginia Historical Society, which named a portrait gallery after him, and William and Mary College (his alma mater), which designated the Omohundro Institute of Early American History in honor of his contributions.

M.H. is survived by his wife, Libbey, of Richmond.

by Rand McKinney

Deceased Members

William H. Foster, Jr., February 20, 1999, age 80,
father of member Nancy McGraw,
and son of Bess H. Omohundro Foster

Malvern H. Omohundro, Jr.
see facing page

Texas Jack Cemetery Donations

Russell F. Bath, Jr.
R. W. Coble
William Coleman
Nancy Foster McGraw
Tipton T. Omohundro
Gloria O. Palmer
Melanie Melam Roth

Cemetery Donations in Memory of Virginia Van Leu

Edna Nees
Kitty and Karl Pelkan
Ben and June Wyche

Unrestricted Bequests

M. H. Omohundro, Jr.

New members

Sam Patterson, Box 1029 Oliver Creek, Troy, VA 22974

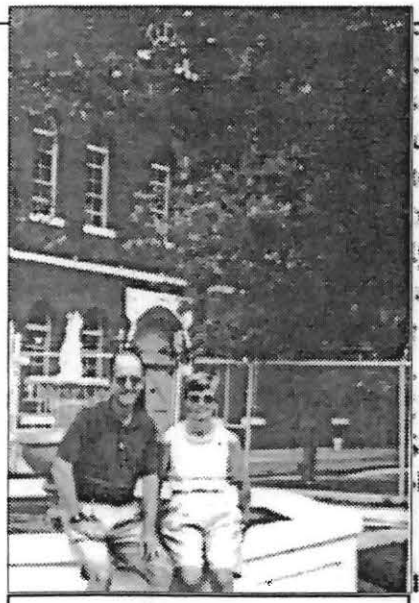
Charles Chapin, Windridge farm, 6820 Wagon Ford Rd., Chatham IL 62629

METRO WATER SERVICES

WATER LINE

Vol. 1 No. 2 Fall, 1998

This newsletter recently came our way. Association members who attended the 1996 Roundup in Nashville, Tennessee will recall visiting the Omohundro Water Works as part of their tour of local attractions. This plant is named for Orville Logue Omohundro, the oldest son of Texas Jack's brother Orville. He was an engineer in Nashville; the plant is located on land he once owned, and some of the streets in the neighborhood are also named Omohundro.
It looks like the Omohundro Water Works has a healthy future.



John and Susan Omohundro in front of the Omohundro Water Plant

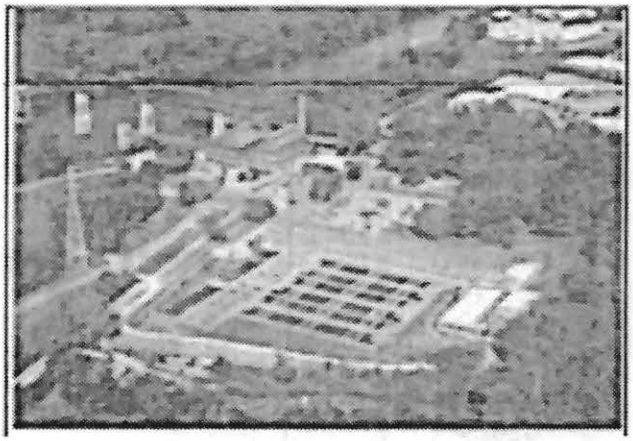
OMOHUNDRO WATER PLANT EXPANSION

The Omohundro Water Treatment Plant has supplied drinking water to our city for over 100 years. Recently, Gresham, Smith and Partners made a study of the plant and presented recommendations for its expansion.

The most cost effective way to meet Nashville's water needs is to expand the flow from Omohundro (from 60 mgd to 90 mgd) to give it the same capacity as K. R. Harrington, the other treatment facility that supplies potable water to Nashville. This expansion will ensure that if one plant is unable to operate in an emergency the other facility could sustain water to the city.

W. Joe Whitson says in *Tennessee Public Works* that "As part of its comprehensive, proactive planning for Omohundro, MWS [Metro Water Services] is also reviewing operations, examining the degree of automation and evaluating future staffing needs for the water treatment facility." Recommendations will be presented later in 1998.

(Taken from an article in the Tennessee Public Works newsletter, March/April 1998).



Omohundro Water Treatment Plant facility, located at 1400 Omohundro Drive, Nashville, Tennessee

Your Wild West Store

Use order form on back of dues form

T-shirts.....$15.00

The popular Texas Jack poster nearly covers the front of this 50/50 tee, cream with brown ink. Always a conversation starter! Sizes: a few children's, a few S, some M, numerous L and XL, some XXL.

Sweatshirts.....$20

By popular demand: the same poster as on the tee, on a medium-weight long-sleeve crewneck blended-cotton sweat by "Fruit of the Loom," cream with brown ink. Sizes: some M, many L and XL, some XXL.

Polo shirts.....$20

Smart-looking smooth-surface short-sleeve blended-cotton polo by "Jerzee" with knit collar and cuffs, in white with brown revolver, bust and autograph, as portrayed at right, over left breast. Without pockets. Sizes: M, L, XL, XXL

Coffee Mugs.....$15.00

Cream-colored straight-sided porcelain-style mug, 3 3/4 inches tall, with sepia photograph of the "Three Scouts of Old West", and caption with the nicknames and full names of Hickok, Omohundro, and Cody.

Bandanas.....$5.00

21-inch square cotton kerchief, in cream with a brown oval logo in corner featuring the Texas Jack bust and revolver. A thousand uses!

John Burwell Omohundro's Descendents
.....$45.00

by Edna Nees. First edition, 1993, Charlottesville, VA. 212 pp, photos, hardbound, 7.5 in. x 10 in.
John Baker "Texas Jack" Omohundro's father, his brothers and sister, and their descendents.

Playing cards..... $12.00

Two matching standard-sized plasticized decks, one with Texas Jack and one with Mlle Morlacchi, in sepia on a cream background. Just don't draw aces and eights!

New Item!

Texas Jack poster.....$15.00

11 by 17 inch four-color reproduction of original in Cody Museum, Wyoming. Sepia tinted, on heavy paper, suitable for framing. Includes shipping and handling. Sent rolled in a mailing tube. Reproduced in last issue (XIV no. 1).

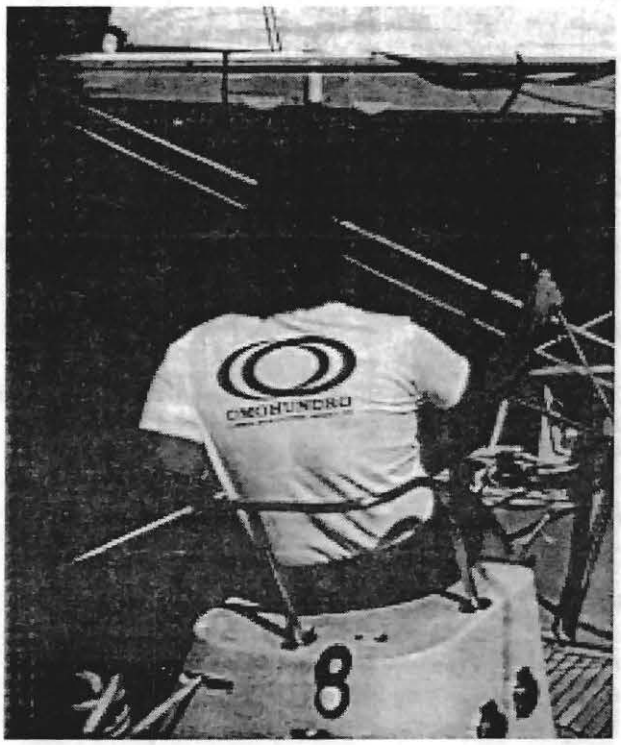
From the Mail Pouch . .

Rick Coble wrote to treasurer Edna Nees, enclosing a photograph from an article in *The Great Chiefs*, from the Time/Life series on western history. The photo is of Kientpoos, the chief of the Medoc Indians. Rick asks, "Could this man possibly be the 'Captain Jack' mentioned in the *Norfolk Journal*, instead of Captain John W. Crawford?" This Modoc chief was nicknamed "Captain Jack"by the local settlers.

In the last issue (XIV no. 1, p. 5) we excerpted a Norfolk reporter's review of "Scouts of the Prairie" in which he editorialized, " If the Indians got up a drama for an Indian audience, they would probably present the "war of extermination" in a light more in accordance with Captain Jack's ideas."

So Rick's suggestion makes perfect sense. The Captain Jack here must be an Indian, especially since the reporter refers to the "Modocs." Thanks, Rick. We delight in members who read with care and care about the facts. -The eds.

Kintpuash, also known as Captain Jack. Born on the California-Oregon border in 1837, he became a major participant in the Modoc War of 1872. He and several other leaders were hanged in 1873. The Modoc were one of the few tribes in the region to resist the influx of white settlers following the Gold Rush of 1848-1849.



Not all Omohundro T-shirts feature Texas Jack. This one promotes Tom Omohundro's company in Carson Valley, Nevada, which makes carbon fiber spars and masts for yachts and America's Cup racers. (Photo from the magazine Sailing, *September 1997.)*

Order Form

for Texas Jack Association gear

(see descriptions in this issue)

Name

Address

Town, State, Zip code

phone _____

Coffee mugs with photo of Texas Jack, Wild Bill, and Buffalo Bill
(how many?) _____ mugs x $15.00 = $_____

Bandanas with oval logo _____ bandanas x 5.00 = _____

T-shirts with Texas Jack poster

_____ children's x 15.00 = _____
_____ small x 15.00 = _____
_____ medium x 15.00 = _____
_____ large x 15.00 = _____
_____ XL x 15.00 = _____
_____ XXL x 15.00 = _____

Sweatshirts with Texas Jack poster

_____ medium x 20.00 = _____
_____ large x 20.00 = _____
_____ XL x 20.00 = _____
_____ XXL x 20.00 = _____

Polo shirts w/ oval logo _____ medium x 20.00 = _____
_____ large x 20.00 = _____
_____ XL x 20.00 = _____
_____ XXL x 20.00 = _____

Book, *John Burwell Omohundro's Descendents*
_____ copies x 45.00 = _____

Playing cards, 2 decks/set, of Texas Jack and Mlle Morlacchi
_____ sets x 12.00 = _____

NEW 11x17 poster of "Texas Jack"
_____ posters x 15.00 = _____

Grand total $_____

one check for gear and dues made out to
TEXAS JACK ASSOCIATION may be included with this form
send to Edna Nees, 213 Coles Rolling Rd, Scottsville VA 24590-3916

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL
1999

YOU can help the Texas Jack Association in its efforts to maintain the memory of that great scout, guide, and actor! Please renew your membership today!

Dues are due on January 1st of each year. The annual membership fees are listed below. Subscription to *The Texas Jack Scout* is included with each membership fee. All dues and monetary contributions are tax deductible. As you are aware, dues, donations, and profits from Association merchandise sales are the sole source of income for the association, while the cost of publishing and mailing the *Scout* is considerable.

We also invite you to make a special donation toward enhancement of the Texas Jack grave site in Leadville.

SINCERE THANKS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

.....

RETURN THIS FORM WITH YOUR CHECK

NAME(s)_____

ADDRESS_____

_____

CITY STATE ZIP

PHONE NO._____ FAX NO._____E-MAIL_____

Enclosed, please find check in the amount of $_____, in payment for annual dues and/or donations, as follows:

- ❑ Adult membership: $15.00 per year
- ❑ Child membership: $10.00 per year (to age 15)
- ❑ Family membership: $40.00 per year (parents and minor children only, please)
- ❑ Donation for Texas Jack grave site enhancement: _____

Make check payable to: THE TEXAS JACK ASSOCIATION, and mail to:

Edna Nees
213 Coles Rolling Road
Scottsville, VA 24590-3916

THE TEXAS JACK ASSOCIATION IS A NON-PROFIT, TAX DEDUCTIBLE CORPORATION

from the Editor's Desk...

by Harvey B. Willard

Bradenton, Florida

Let us take a moment to note the death of M. H. Omohundro, Jr., nephew of Texas Jack and one of the founders of our association. Over the years he contributed to keeping the name of Texas Jack alive and for that we are all grateful. See "In Memoriam" by Rand McKinney in this issue.

For those of you on the Internet please take the time to view the wonderful website, `www.texas-jack.org`, maintained by our President, Richard L. Omohundro. It contains a lot of information with monthly updates and features. Thanks, Dick for doing a terrific job!

Another set of people we should all appreciate are John and Susan Omohundro, "editors-in-chief," who do the layouts for each issue of *The Texas Jack Scout*, and Edna Nees who handles the production and distribution. Tipton Omohundro did a fine job as guest editor of the last issue of *The Texas Jack Scout*. By the way, this issue was delayed because the material was lost in the mail transmission from John and Susan to Edna. Our "wonderful" U. S. Postal Service was to blame! A second delayed mailing was necessary.

Many of you responded to the 1999 dues request in the last issue. For those who forgot, there is another form with this issue. Please send in your money, or *The Scout* will stop coming!

I have one more request. It will make *The Scout* a more interesting and meaningful document if more members would contribute articles, letters, ideas, etc.

Deadline for material for the third issue of Volume XIV is **August 15, 1999.** Send to:

Rand McKinney
1138 Settle Ave
San Jose, CA 95125

e-mail: `rand@netscape.com`

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The Texas Jack Association
Edna Nees, Secretary
213 Coles Rolling Road
Scottsville, VA 24590-3916

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Scout Editor: (current issue): Harvey Willard, layout by John and Susan Omohundro; production by Edna Nees

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Historian and author of *Buffalo Bill*

The Texas Jack Scout
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213 Coles Rolling Road
Scottsville, VA 24590

To:

Kitty Wyche Pelkan
6021 37th. Ave. SW
Seattle WA 98126

~~1998~~
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LYNCHBURG VA 24 JUN 3 1999

J. B. Omohundro.

Inside. . .
TJ's nephew, fiasco in Niagara Falls, and more