

The TEXAS JACK SCOUT

Volume XVIII, No. 1

January 2003

The "Quest of Honor" Arrives at Texas Jack's Grave

by Edward Jordan Lanham



Eddie Lanham installs the veteran's marker

Eddie first reported on his plans to honor Texas Jack's military service in the January 2002 Scout. Herewith the conclusion to his "quest." -ed.

What a drive! Brooks, Georgia to Leadville, Colorado. Jack's headstone, face up in the back of the truck, gazed at the beautiful sky. Across Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado we traveled some 1800 miles with our precious cargo until we reached Leadville, our final destination.

We arrived on the morning of Sept. 25, 2002, along with a brisk taste of early winter. By noon, Mother Nature blessed us with temperature in the low 60s. Was this a Leadville heat wave?

The local Chamber of Commerce was helpful in giving directions to the cemetery and Jack's grave. Because of the wide entrance to the cemetery, we were able to back our RV to within 100 feet of his grave. The headstone weighs about 150 pounds and I had forgotten the hand trucks, so my wife and I carried Jack the final leg of the trip. . . in our arms, and placed him on God's earth. After saying a few words for Jack, and 150 pounds lighter, we departed.

continued on page 3

from the Editor's Desk...



HOWDY! Other than attending several of the Roundups, being guest editor of this *Scout* edition has been my first (of possibly more) TJA volunteer efforts. I must say, that it has spurred my interest in reading and learning more about John B. Omohundro and his times. Therefore, I'd like to thank everyone who contributed to this edition and to the help and patience of John Omohundro and Lorrie Tenos. In addition, I'd like to thank Martha Sullivan and others for the terrific job organizing the last Roundup in Deadwood, SD. A great time was had by all! As a matter of fact, I learned that Bill Walsh, our host at the Historic Franklin Hotel, was so impressed with our group and the subsequent summary of the Roundup (produced in *The Scout* Fall 2002 edition by Kitty Pelkan) that he ordered 50 copies of *The Scout* to distribute in Deadwood! I look forward to seeing everyone in my home state (and that of Texas Jack), Virginia, in 2004!

Kelly L. Wyche

Deadline for materials for the next issue of
The Scout is March 1, 2003.

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The Texas Jack Association was founded in 1980 to commemorate John B. Omohundro, cowboy, prairie scout, western hunting guide, and Wild West showman, colleague of Buffalo Bill Cody and Wild Bill Hickok.

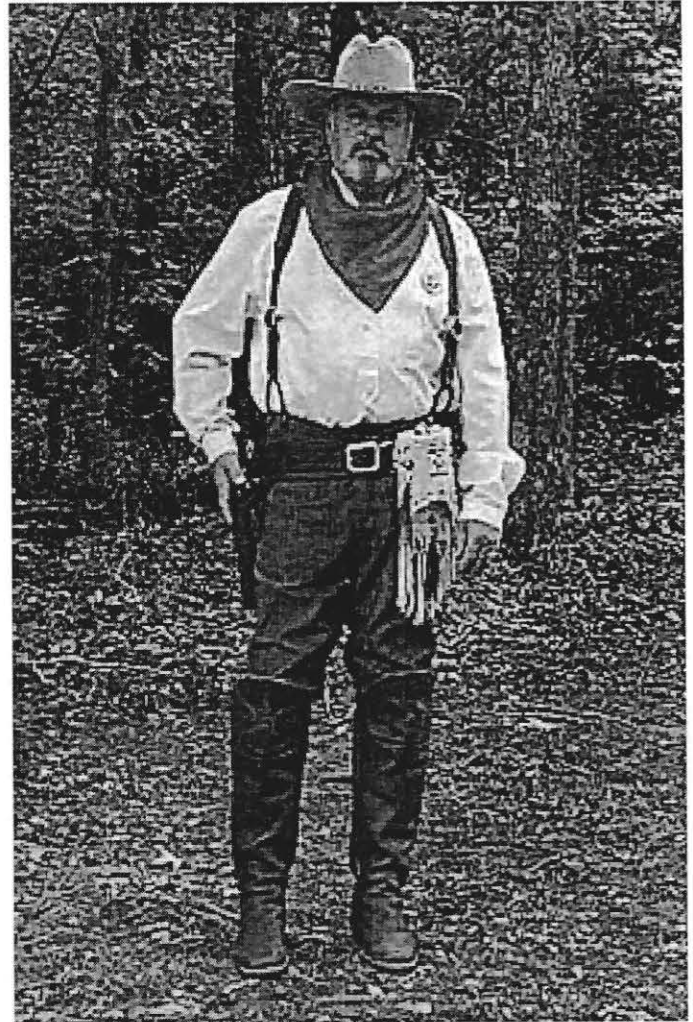
The Texas Jack Scout publishes articles about John B. "Texas Jack" Omohundro, the times and places in which he lived, or individuals who have contributed substantially to maintaining his memory.

continued from page 1

With Leadville in our rearview mirror we turned to each other and smiled, knowing that Jack and his family would be thankful for our efforts that we call our “quest of honor.” Now Jack will not only be known to the many that visit his grave as “Texas Jack,” but as the brave young *Virginian* who served under the famous commander J.E.B. Stewart during our nation’s greatest conflict.

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Eddie is correct to imagine that Texas Jack’s fans are thankful for this marker. We are amazed and delighted at the effort he has put into this project. — ed.



Eddie Lanham in his 1880s “Cowboy” outfit

continued on page 4



The Lanhams’ RV camped beside the Arkansas River south of Leadville





The new marker at Texas Jack's grave



REMEMBER: DUES ARE DUE!



ADULT: \$15/YEAR

CHILD: \$10/YEAR

FAMILY: \$40/YEAR

SEE ENCLOSED MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

The Pleasure Hill Plantation, Part 2

by Susan Omohundro

In the April 2002 issue of the *Scout* (pp. 9-10) we reported on the work of Association Secretary Edna Nees and her crew to rehabilitate the cemetery at Pleasure Hill, the childhood home of Texas Jack. The cemetery holds his mother and five of his siblings, including Arabella.



Arabella Omohundro Wohlbruck Nees, Texas Jack's sister, at age 75. Photo from E. Nees, John Burwell Omohundro's Descendants.

The work has been completed. The cemetery is now surrounded by a sturdy metal fence. At the Deadwood Roundup in June, 2002, members approved a motion to erect a plaque identifying the

people buried in the cemetery, since only Arabella's grave has a proper marker.

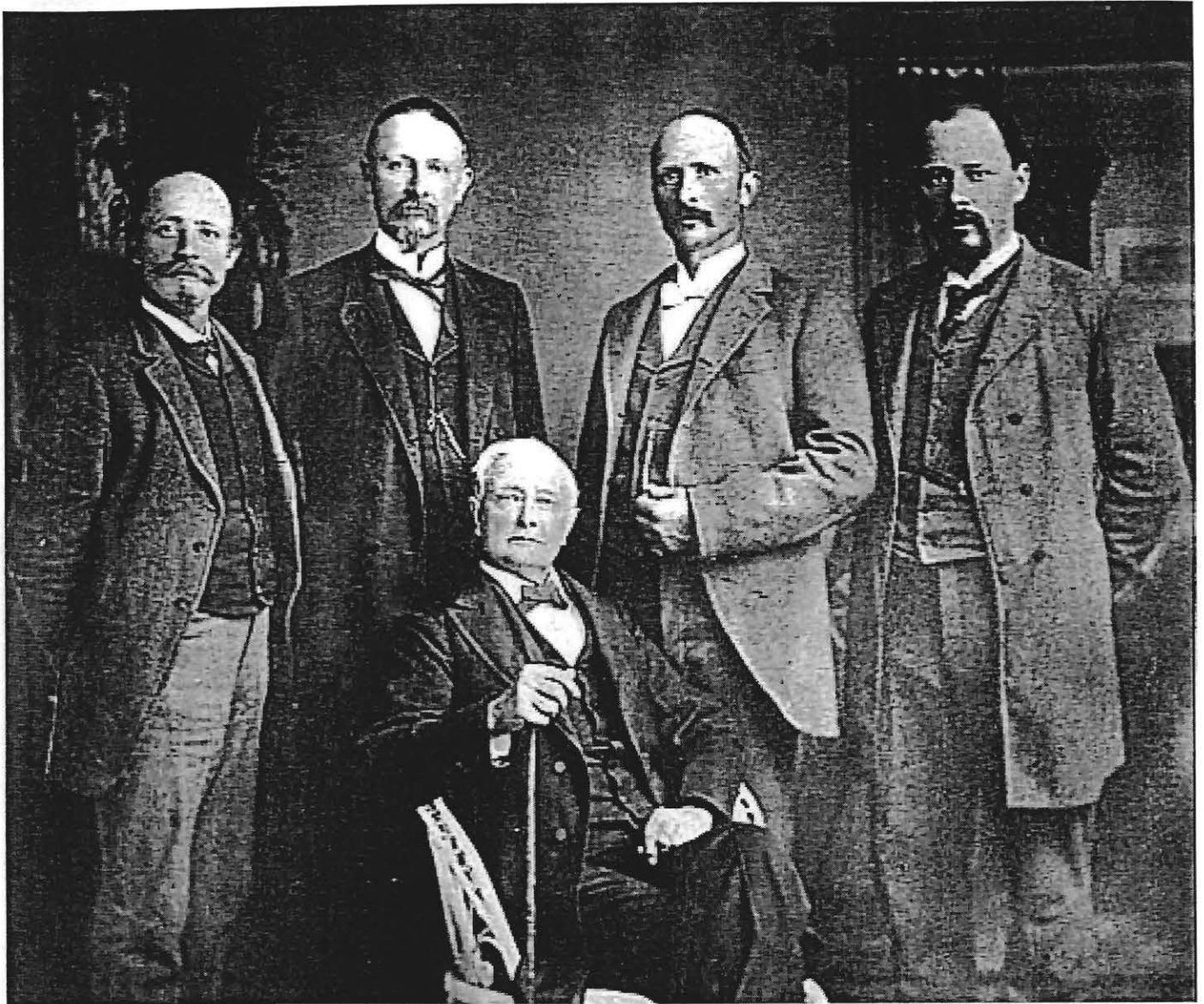
We plan to visit Pleasure Hill and other Fluvanna County sites important to Texas Jack's history at the next Roundup, which will be based in nearby Charlottesville, Va.

Pleasure Hill Plantation

Texas Jack's father, John Burwell O. (1816-1901), bought Pleasure Hill in 1845. At that time he gave up his mercantile business in the nearby hamlet of Wilmington and entered farming. He bought several separate but adjoining pieces of land, 562 acres in all, on Cunningham Creek, about 1.5 miles west of Palmyra, the county seat of Fluvanna. He called his plantation Pleasure Hill. His youngest son, Malvern Hill Omohundro, in the *Omohundro Family Genealogical Record*, says that John "kept an open house, and entertained the best people in his county, and many from a distance." All of John's dozen children, except the first three, were born there, beginning with John Baker ("Texas Jack"), b. 1846,

Malvern Hill O., born in 1866, recalled with great fondness his early days at Pleasure Hill and described the annual agricultural cycle. After the Civil War, and probably before, the farm was diversified and emphasized wheat, corn, tobacco, and hogs. He recalled that the house at Pleasure Hill was large and stood in a cluster of oak trees amidst the fields, about one mile from the highway.

Although Malvern remembered a pleasant existence there, examination of the demographic data shows that life for his elders was not always easy. Catherine Baker married John Burwell when she was only 16, and had 11 children, four of whom did not survive, before she died at 40. Her daughter,



Texas Jack's father John Burwell O. (seated) and (L to R): brothers Richard James O., Orville Calhoun O., Moten Patterson O., and Martin Woodville O. Photo from E. Nees, John Burwell Omohundro's Descendants.

Arabella, was only 15 when Catherine died. We can take it as a sign of a close mother-daughter tie that Catherine gave her bible to "Belle" before she passed away. Also, the fact that Arabella wanted to be buried at Pleasure Hill with her mother indicates a strong, lifelong attachment. The future Texas Jack was only 18 when his mother died. This must have been a very difficult time for him too, and maybe his mother's death had something to do with Jack's

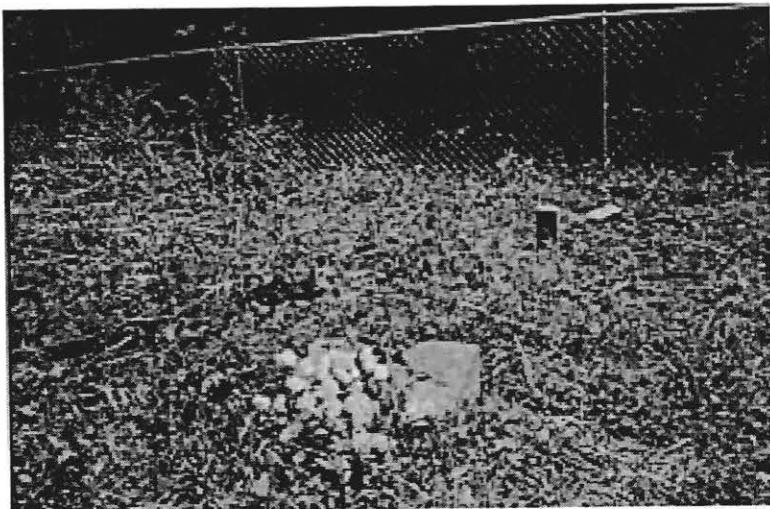
decision to head out west. Furthermore, the Civil War took a toll on the family, financially and emotionally.

John B. had given his sons Orville and John together 100 acres in 1868. This piece of land he had bought in 1855, and was described as lying on the south branch of Raccoon Creek and on the east of Cokes Road, and valued at \$600. Both sons decided to relinquish this land. John (described as residing in

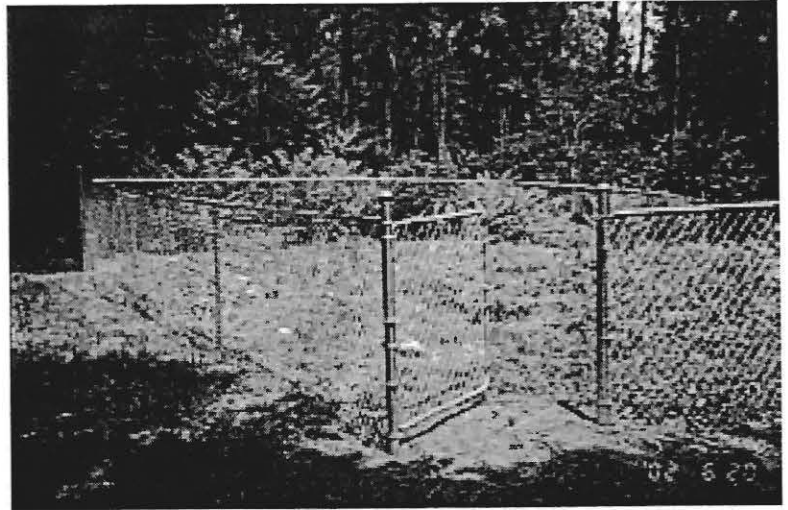
New York City) sold his half-share to his brother in 1871 for \$150; the next year Orville, now married and living in Tennessee, sold the 100 acres for \$350.

Malvern concedes that "he [John B.] had to live to see his fortune, the accumulation of his young life, fade before his eyes in his old age from the ravages of war and security debts." The deeds show that John mortgaged his 562 acres in 1870 for \$1350. This proved to be a burden, never removed. He was never able to pay his debt, with interest, of \$1600, and finally lost his farm 25 years later, in 1895, as will be described later.

In 1872 John filed under the provisions of the 1870 Homestead Act of the Virginia Assembly, taking status as housekeeper and head of family to claim his right to 350 acres, valued at about \$2000 (encumbered for about \$1000), three horses worth \$150, 14 cattle (\$140), 35 hogs and pigs (\$70), an old wagon (\$15), farm implements (\$50), household and kitchen furniture (\$150), a crop of corn (\$50), a crop of wheat (\$50), and a buggy and harness (\$30).



*Arabella's gravestone in the Pleasure Hill cemetery.
Photo by Edna Nees.*



*The new fence around Pleasure Hill cemetery.
Photo by Edna Nees.*

This may be taken as evidence that he was much less prosperous than before the Civil War.

In 1874 John sold 115 acres (a piece of land separate from Pleasure Hill, on Raccoon Creek) to A. J. Seay for \$500. It appears he was trying to raise some cash.

In 1892 John and his second wife, Margaret Shores, signed a contract with an option on just over 300 acres of his land with mineral rights with T. N. Gaines, described as a "bachelor" in Richmond, for \$4,575. The Omohundros retained 50 acres and "dwelling house." This last-minute scramble to arrange with Gaines to develop mineral resources must have fallen through, because in 1895 John was finally forced to auction 318 acres and the house. Henry and Richard Wood, from Richmond, paid only \$500 for the farm and its "mansion." Richard Wood had been one of the parties to the mortgage contract signed in 1870.

The house at Pleasure Hill burned in 1905, four years after the old man's death. Malvern cites a newspaper article from the Dec. 7 Richmond *Times-Dispatch* about the destruction of "the Omohundro mansion, an old landmark of Fluvanna, the homestead of that 'fine old Virginia gentleman, John B. Omohundro.'" This encomium is believed to have been written by Capt. Wm. Talley, a friend and former neighbor. The article goes on:

Before the War it was a fine old estate, situated on Cunningham Creek, which empties into the Rivanna just below Palmyra, its fertile lowlands and rolling hills were always in fine condition, and it was known far and wide for its old time Virginia hospitality. Open handed, generous to a fault, fond of high living, Mr. Omohundro found himself after the War utterly unable to adapt himself to the new condition of things, and as the old place had to be abandoned his large family of boys and girls scattered, to seek what fortune had in store. All of them have succeeded in life and are remembered in their native county as a family of sterling worth and exceeding beauty of person. Mr. and Mrs. Omohundro's two girls and six boys were all remarkably handsome people and possessed of strikingly affable and lovable manners. One of the sons, John Jr., was the famous 'Texas Jack' who won reputation with 'Buffalo Bill' and was for many years identified with the 'Wild West Shows.'"

Buried at Pleasure Hill Cemetery:

Catherine S. Baker Omohundro: July 1, 1824 - November 16, 1864

Adelaide Virginia Omohundro: October 15, 1841 - April 16, 1848

-- Catherine's first child, died at age 6

Catherine Mary Omohundro: November 13, 1847 - June 8, 1848

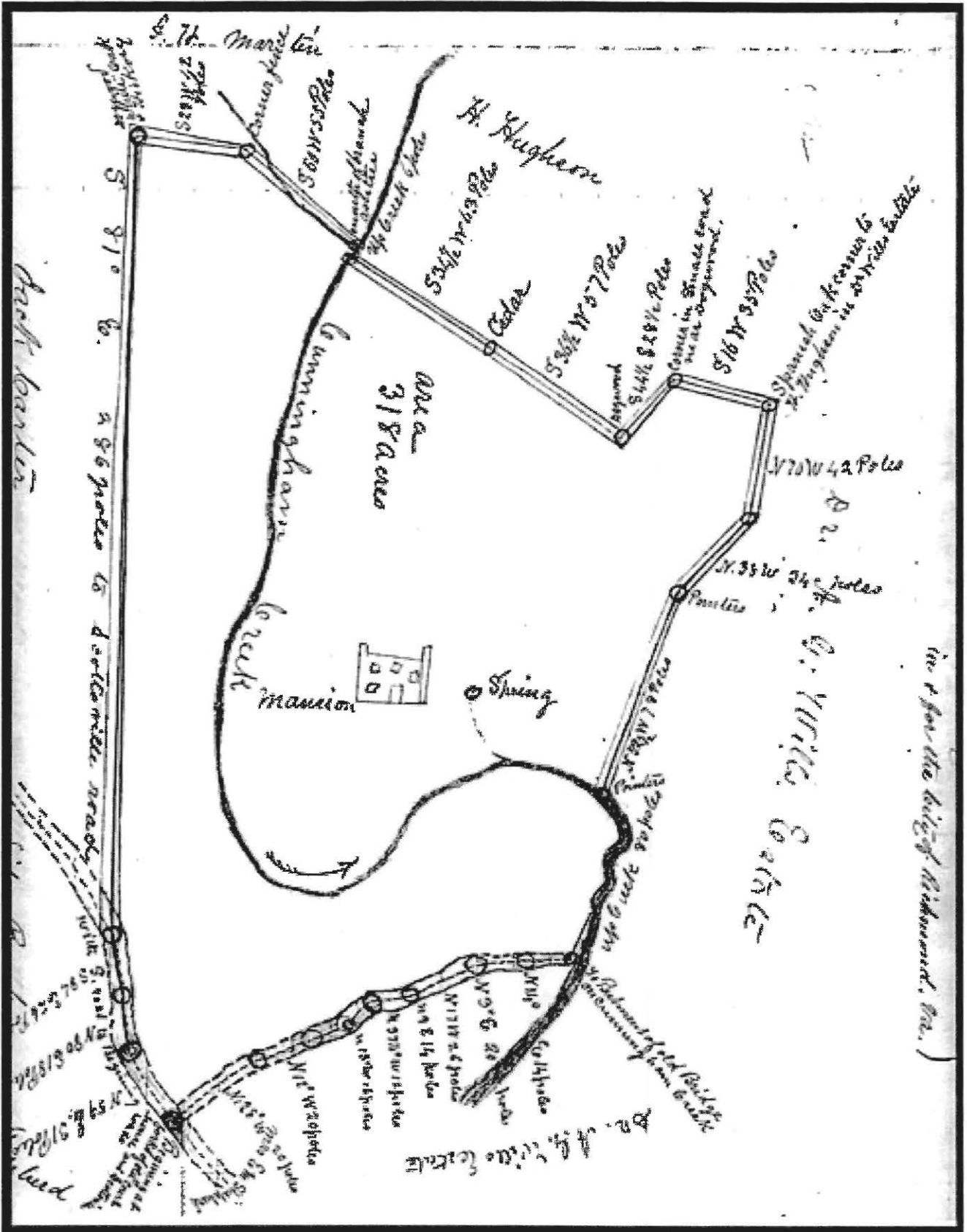
-- Catherine's fifth child, born after Texas Jack

Seldon Bickerton Omohundro: September 7, 1858 - March 5, 1863

Manassas Omohundro: July 21, 1861

-- Seldon and Manassas were Catherine's last two children

Arabella Adelaide Omohundro Wohlbruck Nees: July 22, 1849 - November 8, 1939



Surveyor's map of Pleasure Hill in 1895. Note the drawing of the house.
 From Fluvanna County Courthouse, Palmyra, VA.

TEXAS JACK IN MODERN PULP

a Book Review by John Omohundro

"Hickok and Cody," St Martins Paperbacks, NY, 2001

by Matt Braun

My father (Thomas T. Omohundro, of Mesa, AZ) directed my attention to this wild west novel by an author of more than two dozen westerns, including ones entitled *Doc Holliday* and *Wyatt Earp*. The Texas Jack Association is always on the lookout for references to John Baker "Texas Jack" Omohundro in contemporary publications. In this appearance, John B. gets a strong supporting role, as does his wife, Josephine Morlacchi.

The story begins in 1872, on the plains, where Wild Bill and Buffalo Bill are escorting Grand Duke Alexis for a buffalo hunt. It's the author's right to shape history into fiction, but readers should know that in fact Texas Jack and Buffalo Bill did the escorting at this event; Wild Bill was not a buffalo hunter. Nevertheless, in Braun's novel, at the conclusion of this hunt the pard Bill and Bill encounter a train from the east, the "orphan train," carrying two children kidnapped in New York City to be sold in the west as laborers and domestics. The orphan train actually existed, one of several true elements that enrich this adventure. The train was intended by wealthy eastern philanthropists to provide a future for disadvantaged children by sending them west to join new "families" among the pioneers, who were always needing able-bodied workers.

Hickok and Cody travel to New York City to return Katherine and Augustus, two children they have rescued, to their parents and to rendezvous with Buntline, Omohundro, and Morlacchi for a bit of show business.

Ned Buntline is accurately presented as a blustery, driven man with a checkered past, but also as an effective producer/director. Braun describes him as I see him in historic photos: "... a short, stout man with a game leg and a winning smile." He is going to direct Hickok, Cody, Omohundro, and Morlacchi in *The Scouts of the Plains*. (In fact,

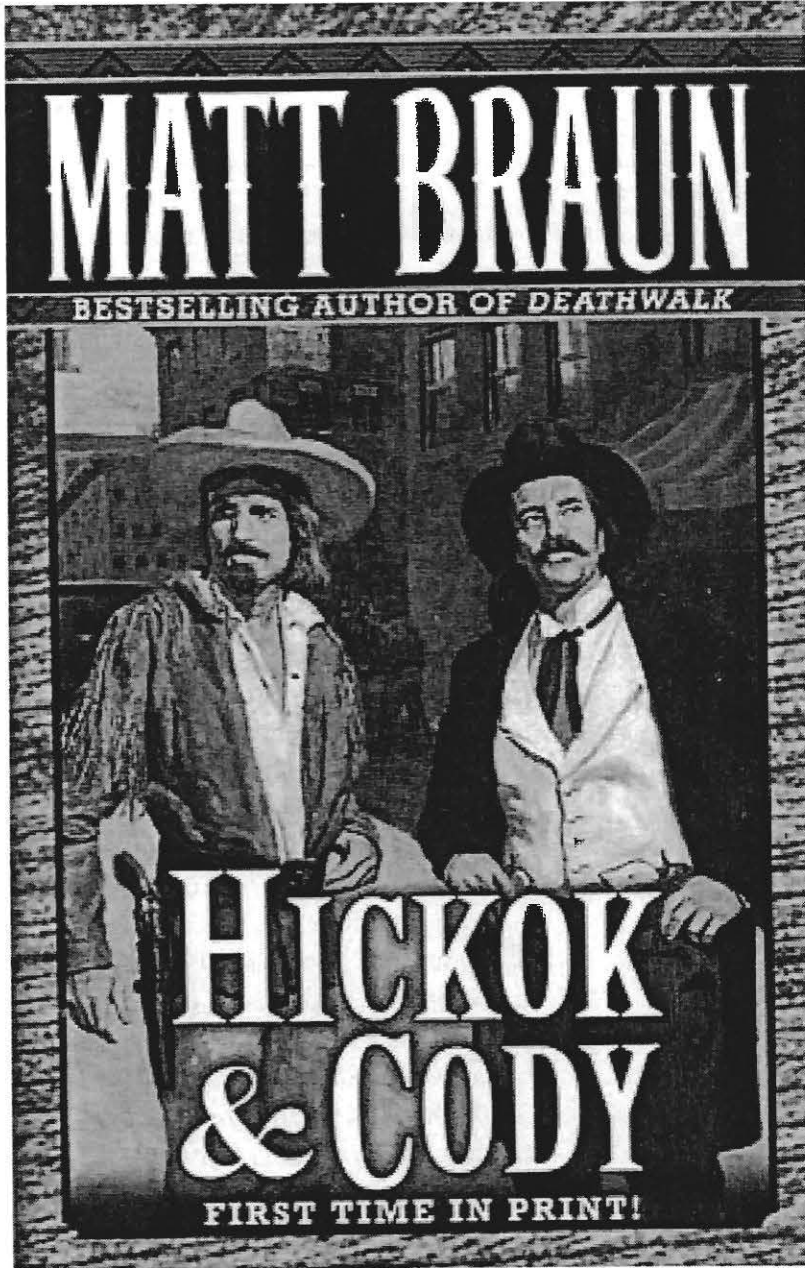
Buntline had been let go when Hickok joined the show for the 1873-74 season. Arizona John Burke had become the publicist and producer.)

**CODY: "YOU GOT ANY IDEA A'TALL
HOW RICHTER WILL COME AT US?"**
**HICKOK: "NOPE. . . FORGOT TO TELL YOU,
WE LEARNED HIS FIRST NAME. HE'S CALLED OTTO."**
**OMOHUNDRO: "SORRY SCUTTER.
I'D SOONER CALL HIM DEAD." P 183**

"Texas Jack" Omohundro is portrayed as "... a leath-

ery, rawboned plainsman with a soupstrainer mustache" p 117, which is not the way he looks to me. Still, Jack is correctly described as a former scout and a close friend of Cody and Hickok. The author presents the rest of the story as we know it: "Texas Jack Omohundro was a Westering man who had come East. By birth a Southerner, he had served with J. E. B. Stuart's Cavalry Corps during the Civil War. Afterward, he migrated to Texas, where he'd gained his nickname and a reputation as an Indian fighter. He knew Hickok from a sojourn through Kansas, and until last year, he had worked as a scout at Fort

McPherson. Cody had talked him into joining the Buffalo Bill Combination.” (p 120; in fact, that wasn't the show's name until Jack left in 1876.)



Braun continues, “New York, curiously enough, agreed with Omohundro. One season on the stage seemingly turned a roughhewn plainsman into a citified dandy. All the more important, he had

fallen for a beautiful Italian actress and married her in the spring of 1871.” (p. 120; in fact, Josephine and John were married in August, 1873, after their first season, but indeed they were a married couple when Hickok joined the show.)

Braun concludes his background on Texas Jack by reporting that when Cody returned to duty at Fort McPherson, Omohundro remained behind in Manhattan with Morlacchi and appeared in occasional stage plays until Cody came East for the new season. What really happened, according to Herschel Logan's *Buckskin and Satin*, is that between the first and second season both plainsmen traveled to western Nebraska for a hunting party. The next year, Jack guided for Lord Dunraven in Yellowstone and joined the company late. Morlacchi toured with her own dance company.

To us male readers, Josephine (“Giuseppina”) sounds yummy: “. . . small and svelte, with youthful breasts, a stem-like waist, and nicely rounded hips. Her features were exquisite, somehow exotic and doll-like, with a lush, coral mouth that accentuated her high cheekbones. Her hair was the color of dark sable and she spoke with a pronounced Italian accent.” (p. 122). Josephine, “with her flawless olive complexion,” made an excellent Indian maiden, a standard fixture in the dime novels and in Buntline's new wild west stage shows.

Morlacchi is correctly reported to have studied dance at La Scala, Milan, to have debuted in Genoa, and to have appeared throughout Europe and England before immigrating to America (Braun says in 1869, but in fact 1867). Her legs are rumored to be insured for \$100,000 by Lloyds of London.

True to history, Hickok doesn't like show biz, but Cody does. Braun's Wild Bill is also authentically anti-East, anti-city, and trouble-prone, if less boozy. This makes his dialogue quite entertaining, especially for us easterners.

For example, Hickok complains a few times about the stench of the city streets. Buntline relates with impish pride the *New York Times* report that there were forty thousand horses in the city, each day dropping four hundred tons of manure and twenty thousand gallons of urine. I applaud the author for these touches of unpleasant historical reality.

While plugging a plethora of thugs in street fights and trying to track down the gang responsible for the orphan train, our heroes open off-Broadway at the Arch St. Theater in Philadelphia. (In fact, Cody, Omohundro, Buntline, and Morlacchi had performed *Scouts of the Prairie* at the Arch St. Theater in their first year, without Hickok). Expecting a ballet on the basis of Morlacchi's credentials, the novel's Philadelphia audience is delighted with the can-can, at that time a risqué new dance in the dance halls of Paris and rare, perhaps unique, in America. (Logan's *Buckskin and Satin* reports that Josephine premiered the can-can in Boston in 1868, but I'm sure it was a big hit always).

True to history, Wild Bill shoots out the calcium spotlight that is blinding him on stage. Bill's eyesight was failing, but that goes unmentioned here. Cody then suggests they keep the stunt in the show—which didn't really happen but is certainly in character, because Cody had great instincts for the crowd-pleasing action. Later, and also true to history, a bored Wild Bill singses with his revolver the legs of actors playing Indians.

Braun quotes what I presume are genuine newspaper reviews of the *Scouts* show—but he is selective, because he dwells on the praise. The reviews were in fact mixed. Critics were certain that the show was awful but they were impressed with

how much it delighted the audience, and the actors were unquestionably attractive fellows, heroes of the real west.

After success in Philadelphia, the show opens at the Lyceum, on Broadway at 22nd Street, which is reasonable although I can't confirm it. Braun gives a short but vivid sketch of what 'the Rialto' (the legitimate theatre district along Broadway) was like in the 1870s. Again, we history buffs appreciate these bits of authentic background.

As for their role in the adventure, Omohundro and Morlacchi the married couple often play caretakers for the two children while bachelors Cody and Hickok are out blasting bad guys. During one particularly harrowing moment, Josephine is kidnapped by toughs of the orphan kidnapping ring.

Nevertheless, when the clouds of dust and cordite lift, all has ended satisfactorily for our heroes. Hickok is grateful to be rescued from show business by a call from General Sheridan to come to Ft. Laramie, Wyoming Territory, to deal with the Sioux. This incident is also reported in Logan.

In sum, *Hickok and Cody* is a shoot 'em up fiction about a genuine shoot 'em up play. By stressing the exciting adventures of real plainsmen, Braun in the 21st century has done what Buntline did in the 19th. In both authors' adventures, our boys are blasting dozens of bad guys and rescuing maidens. And as the critics wrote over a hundred years ago, I can also say today: it's pretty wretched stuff but it's still a lot of fun, and it's a fine thing that Texas Jack has a prominent role.



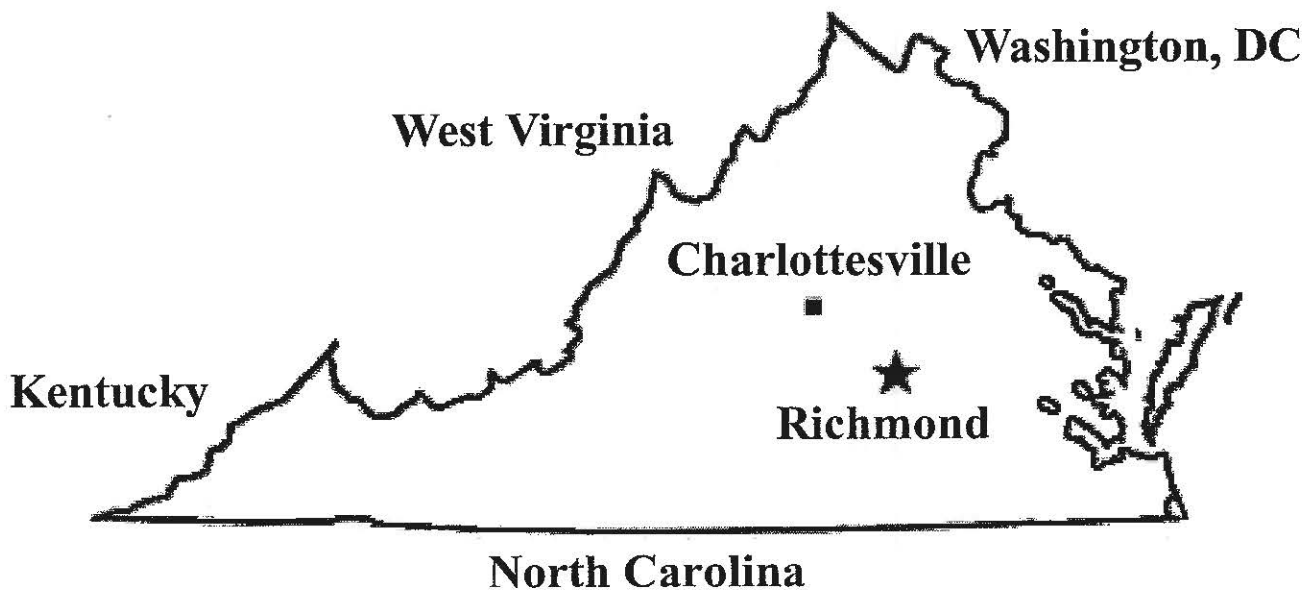
BiAnnual Roundups In Summary...

The Roundups have been held in the following locations:

- 1980 Leadville, CO
- 1984 Cody, WY
- 1986 North Platte, NE
- 1988 Richmond, VA
- 1990 Leadville, CO
- 1992 San Antonio, TX
- 1994 Lowell, MA
- 1996 Nashville, TN
- 1998 Cody, WY
- 2000 Oklahoma City, OK
- 2002 Deadwood, SC



Did you know that the first Roundup held in 1980 included approximately 20 attendees and that a record number of 67 members attended the last Roundup in Deadwood? We look forward to increasing the number of participants at the **2004 Roundup to be held in Charlottesville, VA**, so mark your calendars and spread the word.



Johnny Baker, Founder of the Buffalo Bill Museum and Gravesite **Compiled by Edna Nees and John Omohundro**

When Edna was visiting Colorado, she photographed Johnny's portrait at the museum he founded on Lookout Mountain, outside Golden, Colorado. Referred to by Buffalo Bill as his "adopted son," Johnny was a marksman known as "the Cowboy Kid." He participated in placing the fine granite marker on Texas Jack's grave when Buffalo Bill and his entire troupe visited Leadville in September, 1908, to honor Texas Jack.

From "Buffalo Bill's Life" at the museum's web site, www.buffalobill.org, we gratefully borrow this background:

"Buffalo Bill never retired, even though he had hoped to do so. He did two years of farewell performances while his show was combined with Pawnee Bill's in 1908 but discovered at the end of the second



year that he could not retire. Growing personal debts due to bad investments left him with little to retire on. Even after Cody left the Sells-Floto circus, his financial situation kept him performing with other wild west shows. In 1917 Buffalo Bill died while visiting his sister's home in Denver. According to his wife Louisa it was his choice that he be buried on Lookout Mountain overlooking Denver and the Plains."

"Despite the claims of the citizens of Cody, Wyoming that he really wanted to be buried near Cody, close friends like Goldie Griffith and Johnny Baker, as well as the priest who administered last rites, affirmed that Lookout Mountain was indeed his choice. On June 3, 1917, Buffalo Bill was buried on Lookout Mountain, a promontory with spectacular views of both the mountains and plains, places where he had spent the happiest times of his life.

"Louisa, who had married Buffalo Bill back before he became famous, was buried next to her husband four years later. That year, 1921, the Buffalo Bill Memorial Museum was begun by Johnny Baker, close friend and unofficial foster son to Buffalo Bill."

*Johnny Baker, the "Cowboy Kid," founder of the Buffalo Bill Museum on Lookout Mountain.
Photo by Edna Nees.*

From the plaque in the Lookout Mountain museum:

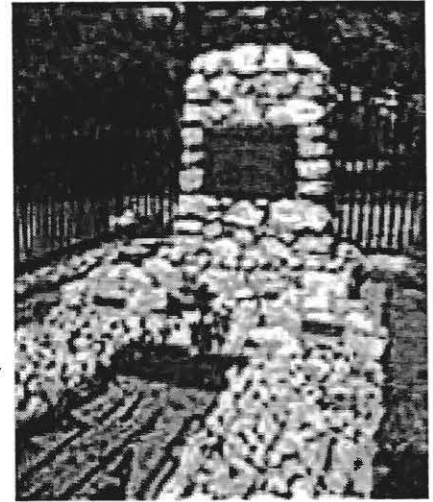
“After Cody died in January of 1917 Johnny tried to put together a Wild West show in honor of the great frontiersman. Cody’s wife and daughter became partners with him and they tried to run a successful show during the 1918 summer season. Their ventured failed and Johnny finally ended his show career.

“For the next few years he worked long and hard to open a memorial museum dedicated to the memory of Buffalo Bill. He and his wife, Olive, negotiated with the City of Denver to have the right to build a structure near the tomb of W. F. Cody on Lookout Mountain. In 1921 they succeeded, and the Buffalo Bill Memorial Museum opened in the spring of that year. The Bakers paid \$10,000 toward the building of the Museum and the City allowed them to operate it with a life-time lease. It was further agreed that the Bakers would donate all of the artifacts to the City upon their deaths.

“Because of their connections, the Bakers were able to fill the Museum with hundreds and hundreds of personal items that had belonged to Cody and the many members of his show. They ran the Museum during the summer months and spent their winters either in Denver or visiting Olive’s sister Marie Burgess Way in Arizona or Johnny’s daughter Gladys and her husband in California. Johnny was completely dedicated to continuing the memory of Buffalo Bill and in addition to his Museum, he also spoke at various meetings and organizations, helping to educate people about his hero and idol, Buffalo Bill.”

The museum’s “Links” page has a link entitled “Texas Jack” but the URL is incorrect. We provided them with the correct information. The article at the museum’s web site concludes:

“Just as millions of people saw Buffalo Bill in his Wild West shows during his life, millions of persons have visited Buffalo Bill’s grave in the years since 1917. Today it is one of the top visitor attractions in Denver and Colorado.”



*Buffalo Bill's grave at the museum on Lookout Mountain.
Photo from Buffalo Bill Museum's web site*

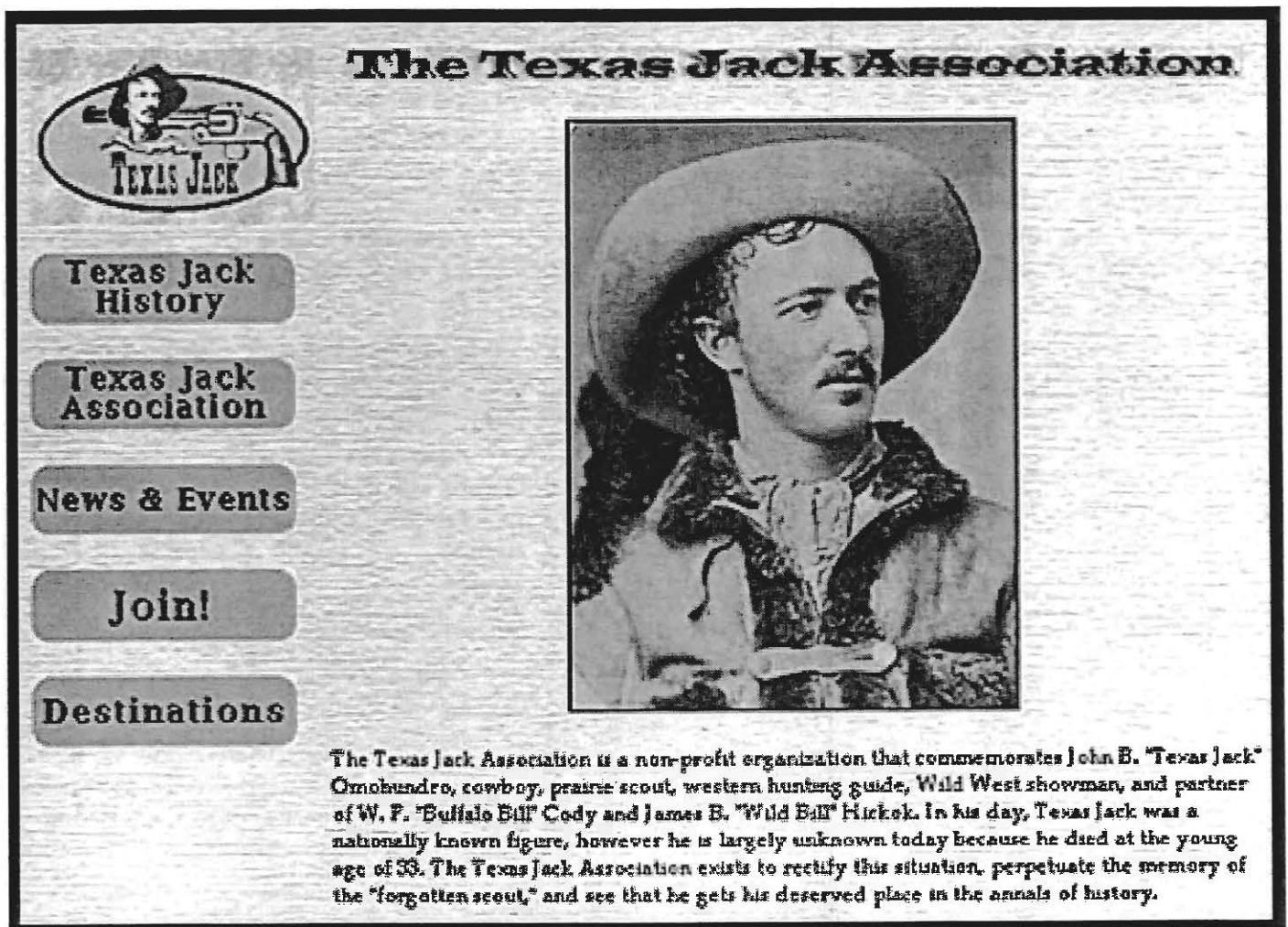
Condolences

Alybel Omohundro Johnson died September 24, 2002. She was born November 19, 1907. She was a Texas Jack member and was from Nashville, Tennessee; she attended the Roundup in 1996 when it was held in Nashville.

John Wood Omohundro died November 22, 2002 at MCV Hospital in Richmond, Virginia. Born July 23, 1926 in Wildwood, he was the son of the late Maude Wood Omohundro and Ray C. Omohundro, Sr. Also preceding him in death was his wife Mary Ballowe Frame Omohundro. Survivors include one brother, R.C. Omohundro, Jr., of Fork Union, VA and one sister, Virginia O. Purcell and her husband, Judge Harold Purcell, of Louisa, VA and Vero Beach, Florida respectively. He is also survived by several nieces and nephews. Mr. Omohundro served in both the US Navy and US Air Force. He was privately interred in Scottsville Cemetery.

New TJA Website: Work in Progress – Making Progress

TJA Vice President, Rand McKinney, is developing the new TJA website that can be accessed at <http://www.texasjack.org>. There is now information available on the site as Dick Omohundro has graciously passed on his impressive website files. Rand welcomes any additional suggestions and submissions and asks that you email them to him at webmaster@texasjack.org. Note members can also reach TJA President, Julie Omohundro at president@texasjack.org.



The screenshot shows a website layout for 'The Texas Jack Association'. At the top left is a circular logo featuring a portrait of a man and the text 'TEXAS JACK'. To the right of the logo is the title 'The Texas Jack Association'. Below the logo are five rounded rectangular buttons: 'Texas Jack History', 'Texas Jack Association', 'News & Events', 'Join!', and 'Destinations'. On the right side of the page is a large black and white portrait of a man in a cowboy hat and fur-lined coat. Below the portrait is a paragraph of text.

The Texas Jack Association

Texas Jack History

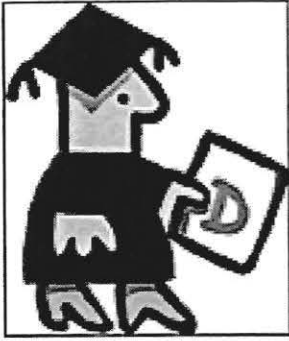
Texas Jack Association

News & Events

Join!

Destinations

The Texas Jack Association is a non-profit organization that commemorates John B. "Texas Jack" Omohundro, cowboy, prairie scout, western hunting guide, Wild West showman, and partner of W. F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody and James B. "Wild Bill" Hickok. In his day, Texas Jack was a nationally known figure, however he is largely unknown today because he died at the young age of 33. The Texas Jack Association exists to rectify this situation, perpetuate the memory of the "forgotten scout," and see that he gets his deserved place in the annals of history.



Congratulations!

Congratulations to Brandon F. Wyche who graduated Summa Cum Laude from East Carolina University with a degree in social work on December 14, 2002. (father: Malvern Wyche, Jr.; Grandfather: Malvern Wyche, Sr.)

DEADWOOD EVACUATION (from 2002 RoundUp)

Saturday, June 29, 2002

by Kelly Wyche

The Wyche Party of 5, (Kelly, June, Ben, Mal and Ann Wyche of Virginia) packed the car and headed into the stream of traffic leaving Deadwood after word that we were to evacuate. The traffic seemed to be moving so slow and my worries were increasing as you could see the smoke seemingly move closer into the town. I was glad, however, that I knew everyone from TJA had either already left or was on their way out of town.

As driver, my thought was to head to Spearfish, just because I had heard others from our group were going there, but after looking at the map, I was outvoted since this location seemed so close to Deadwood and it was further from our ultimate destination, the Airport in Rapid City. So we headed South on Route 90 planning to stay in Rapid City and possibly changing our flight to leave a day earlier. We watched the huge plume of smoke rising above the hills behind us and hoped that Deadwood and all of its inhabitants would be saved from the fire. Access to the town was closed. We saw dozens of emergency vehicles (from outlying counties) speeding to help with the fire and/or evacuation.

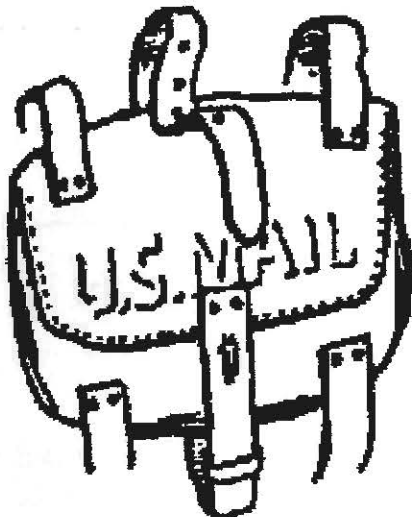
Upon arrival in Rapid City, we found there was 'no room at the Inn' – in ALL of Rapid City. So we kept heading South to Wall, SD, 50 miles east of Rapid City. Well, come to find out there was no vacancy in Wall – in ALL of Wall. We had missed getting a room at three motels just by minutes! So Wyche Party of 5 was getting very worried about the cramped conditions that would succumb if we all had to sleep in our rented Nissan Maxima. We had passed a small hotel just outside of Wall in Wasta which most of us had hoped to avoid; now, however, we hoped The Redwood Motel would come through for us. It was beginning to get dark. So thank goodness we were able to book two rooms in the modest and clean Redwood Motel!! It turns out this little motel was pictured in the 1992 Val Kilmer movie, ThunderHeart.

Needless to say, we didn't bother to change our flights and instead spent an enjoyable Sunday touring the beautiful Badlands before returning home on Monday. We even ran into Judy Phillips at the Rapid City Airport. What an experience!

If this article spurs memories of your departure from the Deadwood Roundup, please submit your evacuation experience to the next Guest Editor of the Scout by March 1, 2003.

From the Mail Pouch. . . .

Rick Omohundro (KY) received this email from Jon Houghton who plans to write a future article for the Scout.



November 18, 2002

Dear Rick,

As I stated in my last email, my grandfather, T.C. Houghton (stagename T.C. Howard) was very good friends with Texas Jack, Buffalo Bill, Wild Bill, Pawnee Bill, and Ned Buntline (among others). Thomas C. Houghton lived in Leadville during the period including 1878-81 and was the manager of the Tabor Opera House (and also acting in almost every play that was there).

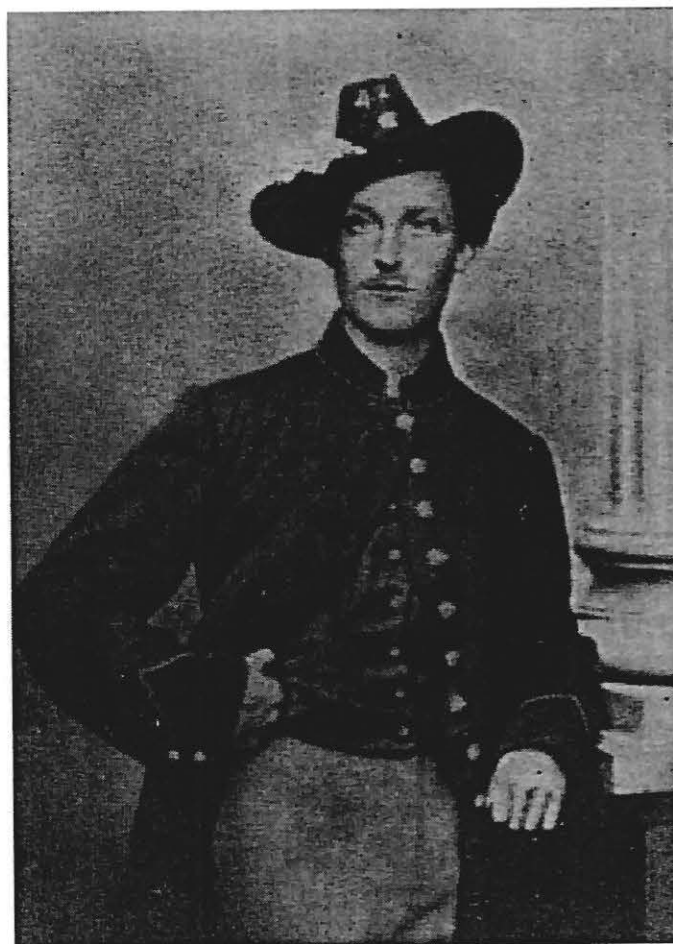
Just prior to his death, Texas Jack and Josephine moved into my father's house a few blocks from the

Tabor Opera House. All three performed at the TOH. TC was with Texas Jack when he died. After Texas Jack's death, TC and Josephine went back to Massachusetts (he to Boston and she to Lowell) where he continued in theater. He lost contact with Josephine after her arrival in Lowell.

Prior to Leadville, TC was the manager of the Tabor Opera House in Denver. There is a picture in the Texas Jack internet org. (and attached here) that shows five men in a posed picture in Denver in 1873. The four men that are named are Texas Jack, Buffalo Bill, Elisha Green and Eugene Overton. The other person in the picture is "unknown" but I know that that is T.C. Houghton, my grandfather. He's the one in the center standing. I've included a picture of TC in his Civil War 42nd Mass Volunteer uniform. If I don't include the picture of his house in Leadville where Texas Jack died and my wife, Rae, and I visited in 1995 then I'll send it in a separate email.

T.C. Howard died shortly after my father was born. At the time of his death he was in Chicago with the Pawnee Bill Wild West Show. He was the general manager and financial person with the touring show.

I'm not a really old person but it always amazes me that my GRANDFATHER (my father's



T.C. Houghton submitted by Jon Houghton

father) knew, and was friendly with so many of the “wild west” characters, like Texas Jack. In my family’s possession we have playbills from the various places that both my grandfather and Texas Jack and Josephine were on stage together. TC was made Lt. Colonel and Commander of the Colorado Leadville Militia and commanded a battalion of veterans enrolled as State troops to quell silver mining riots at Leadville. I’m not sure if Texas Jack was part of that troop, but he was there at the time.

The enclosed pictures should be of interest to you. Please keep in touch. I will send more information later.

Jon
(miahoughton@hotmail.com)

We look forward to hearing more from Jon about his grandfather, TC Howard Houghton, friend of Texas Jack...



T. C. Howard Houghton identified standing, center

From the Mail Pouch. . . (continued)

This email from Debbie Norman, who visited the omohundros.com website, was received and submitted by Lorrie Tenos

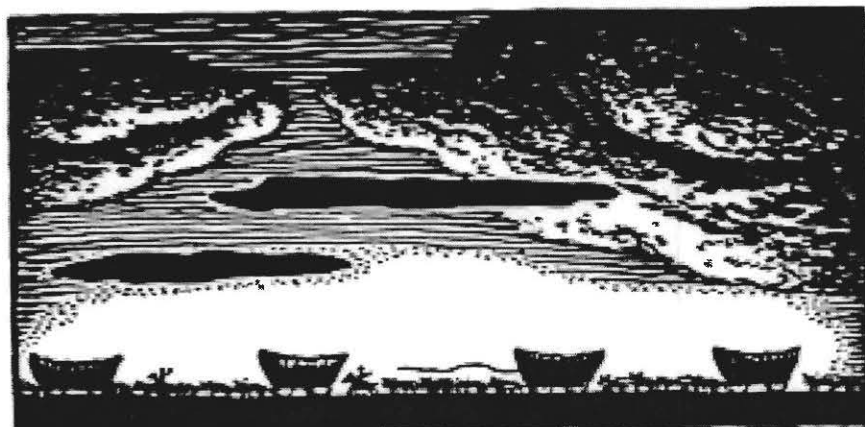
December 7, 2002

Hi — I just ran across one of your ancestors while researching mine (Rockwood). You might already know about this, but thought I'd pass it on. It is from the incorporation papers of the Woman's Canning and Preserving Company, Chicago, 1890. R.C. Omohondro, Notary Public of Cook County, Illinois, on 23 December 1890 notarized the record of the first meeting of the "Woman's Canning and Preserving Company", in which the members elected a board of directors. Bessie C. Omohondro was elected to a two year term to the board. This was a very interesting company, whose officers all were women. It was the brain-child of Amanda T. Jones, who had invented and patented a vacuum sealed canning process. Bessie Omohondro (sometimes referred to as Bettie) was a founding member of the corporation along with Frances A. Conant, Eliza W. Bowman, A. Byford Leonard, E.M. Miller, and E.M. Merritt. My ancestor, Louise Rockwood Wardner, was the first president of the company, headquartered in Chicago at the newly-completed Women's Temple building, a landmark of Chicago School architecture that unfortunately has been demolished. The company ceased operations in 1902.

In an address to the employees of the company, Amanda Jones said, "This is a woman's industry. No man will vote our stock, transact our business, pronounce on women's wages, supervise our factories. Give men whatever work is suitable, but keep the governing power...Here is a mission, let it be fulfilled."

For more info on Amanda Jones see <http://www.inventorsmuseum.com/amandajones.htm>. A book on her is due out in July, 2003.

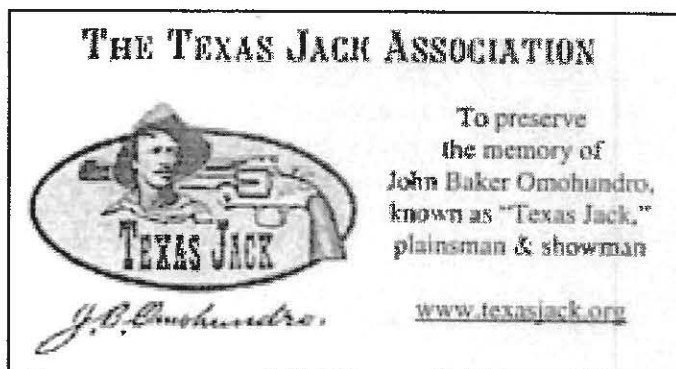
Debbie Norman



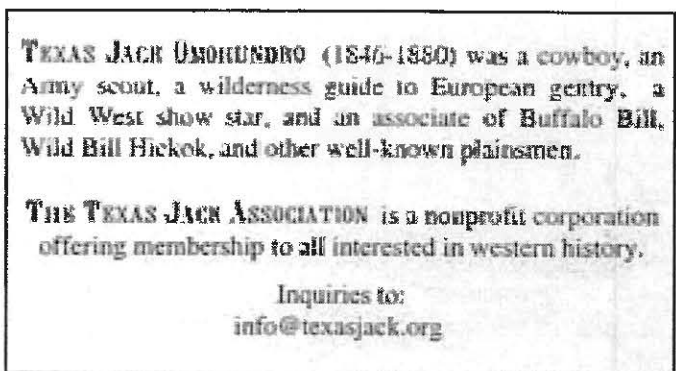
GET THE WORD OUT!

As discussed at the 2002 Deadwood Roundup, the Executive Committee has produced TJA "business" cards. These wallet-sized cards will have a brief description of Texas Jack and the Association, as well as contact information for the Association to be distributed to people who express an interest in Texas Jack. Cards will be forwarded to members when they pay their annual dues in lieu of a membership card.

When people ask, "What the heck is the TJA??" give them one of your contact cards.



front



back

If you wish to receive more, contact Edna Nees at AndeSeen@aol.com

**SEE ENCLOSED
MEMBERSHIP/
RENEWAL FORM**

THIRD ROAD MARKER IS INSTALLED IN LEADVILLE

**submissions from Julie Omohundro, Edna Nees,
Harvey Willard and Linda Hollenback**

The third of three Texas Jack historical markers is now in place in Leadville, Colorado. This last marker was erected in August on State Route 24 at the northern entrance to the town. It was donated by TJA Secretary, Edna Nees, in memory of her husband, John Nees, a grand nephew of Texas Jack.

The marker reads:

**JOHN B. "TEXAS JACK" OMOHUNDRO
1846 – 1880**

Born in Virginia, Texas Jack came west after the Civil War at age 16 to become a cowboy. He later made a name for himself as a plainsman and U.S. government scout who led the Pawnee Indians on their summer hunts and was guide for such notables as the Earl of Dunraven.

In 1872, with friend W.F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody, he achieved national fame by starting the first wild west shows in America. (Texas Jack was honored posthumously in 1994 by induction into the National Cowboy Hall of Fame's Hall of Great Western Performers located at Oklahoma City).

Jack and his lovely wife, the celebrated danseuse Mlle. Guiseppina Morlacchi resided in Leadville where on June 28, 1880 he died at age 33. He is buried in Leadville's Evergreen Cemetery.

Edna had visited Leadville this summer and was surprised to find that the marker she had donated in 1996 was not up. The City was contacted and thanks to the help of Ms. Linda Hollenback (who prior to Edna's visit knew nothing about the situation) the sign was found and she coordinated efforts with the Colorado Department of Transportation to locate a specific site and get the marker installed. Route 24 is a state highway, and as such was out of Leadville's city jurisdiction. In addition, the state requires that a pull-off be installed where markers are erected as a traffic safety measure. Thanks to the efforts of Ms. Hollenback and Colorado DoT, the pull-off and marker were installed in a short period of time.

The first of the three markers was dedicated in Leadville on September 17, 1996 with a welcoming spirit from the City. In attendance were the mayor, Chamber of Commerce members, residents and TJA



members. This highway marker was erected at the southern entrance to the town on State Route 24 and was donated by the Texas Jack Association. The second marker, located at the entrance to Evergreen Cemetery, was donated by Astrid Omohundro in memory of her husband Stuart Omohundro, a grand nephew of Texas Jack.

TJA would like to thank Linda Hollenback, Director of Administrative Services for the City of Leadville, for her time and interest regarding the highway marker and other efforts ongoing in Leadville. - ed.



LETTER-WRITING CAMPAIGN CONTINUES for TJ POSTAL STAMP

The Association would like to see Texas Jack honored on a postage stamp. Remember to write a short letter to the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee each time you receive the Scout stating why the US Postal Service should produce a stamp with Texas Jack's image and name. Send your letters to:

Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Room 4474E
Washington, DC 20260-2437
Attn: James C. Tolbert, Jr.

below is a sample letter written by Dennis Greene in November 1997

Dear Mr. Tolbert:

Hundreds, maybe even thousands of stamps are produced yearly! What a great tribute it would be to honor one of the most deserving historical figures of the 19th Century....John B. (Texas Jack) Omohundro! Although his life was comparatively short, he achieved fame in his own day for those attributes which we all agree helped to make America the great country it is. His lifetime encompassed the Civil War, and the subsequent opening of the great American West.

Surely, with all the stamps available to be dedicated, there would be a place for such a man. *<Dennis continues with the fact that a stamp has already been designed.>*

I hope your committee will consider the merits of honoring this man on the face of an American stamp.

A website has been created for Texas Jack. Won't you take a few minutes to peruse it? I know you will find it most interesting, as have many others judging from the feedback being received. It tells his story and has many graphics. You can find it at: www.texasjack.org.

Thank you very much for giving this your valuable attention.

Sincerely,



President's Quarterly Report December 31, 2002 by Julie Omohundro

Finances

As of August 27, 2002, the Association had a checking account balance of \$9,006.92. Total 2002 income and expenditures through August 27 were \$11,449.00 and \$8,608.20, respectively.

Membership

As of December 15, 2002, the Association had 106 members.

Association Activities

Website. The Association's website was offline much of this year due to a financial glitch with the service provider and a change in webmaster. Dick Omohundro of Grandby, Connecticut, did a great job of setting up the site and has posted a wealth of Texas Jack information to it in recent years. Rand McKinney of Aptos, California, recently assumed webmaster responsibilities and transferred the site to a new provider. The web address is www.texasjack.org. Members with internet access are encouraged to visit the site; anyone who has photos or references that might be appropriate for the site should forward them to Rand.

Email Addresses. The Texas Jack Association now has some email addresses. General inquiries can be submitted to info@texasjack.org. These emails will be forwarded to our secretary, Edna Nees of Scottsville, Virginia. Email related to the website can be sent to webmaster@texasjack.org. These emails will be forwarded to Rand McKinney. Email concerning Association business and activities can be sent to president@texasjack.org. These emails will be forwarded to me. There are links to all three email addresses on the website.

Contact Card. Following up on a suggestion that received strong support at the Deadwood Roundup, the Board recently printed some wallet-sized cards with a brief description of Texas Jack and the Association, as well as contact information for the Association. When members pay their annual dues, they will receive several contact cards in lieu of a membership card. Members are encouraged to put the contact cards in their wallets and distribute them to people who express an interest in Texas Jack.

Bylaws. The Association's bylaws have not been updated since they were first issued in 1987. The Board of Directors will be distributing an updated and expanded set of proposed bylaws for a membership vote in a few months. If you are a current member and would like to comment on the proposed bylaws before they are distributed for a vote, please let us know.

Membership Survey. The Board of Directors will be distributing a survey early in 2003 to develop a profile of our membership and to solicit their opinions on the goals and activities of the Association. If you want your voice to be heard, you must have paid dues in 2002 or pay dues for 2003 no later than February 15.

Help Wanted! The Association needs people to serve as chairs on several key committees:

- Membership - This committee is responsible for processing new members and keeping membership records. Rick Omohundro of Salt Lick, Kentucky, maintains the membership database, but a chair is still needed to process new members.
- Publications - This committee is responsible for the Scout and other publications. TJA currently has guest editors appointed for each issue of the Scout through 2004, but a chair is still needed to coordinate the overall effort and provide guidance to the guest editors.
- Historical Sites - This committee is responsible for the identification and maintenance of sites such as Texas Jack's birthplace in Virginia and burial site in Colorado. A number of members have been active on this committee, but a chair is still needed to coordinate and track their efforts.
- Finance - This committee is responsible for preparing the Association's annual budget.

Incorporation. The incorporation of the Texas Jack Association has lapsed. The Board of Directors will be seeking legal counsel regarding the pros and cons of incorporating.

Texas Jack Projects

Texas Jack Birthplace. A fence has been erected around Texas Jack's family cemetery in Fluvanna County, Virginia. The Association plans to erect a plaque inside the fence that provides information about Texas Jack. The Board of Directors is in the process of drafting the text for the plaque.

Texas Jack Grave Site. A third historical marker was recently erected in Leadville, where Texas Jack is buried. The Association plans to erect signs at the cemetery to help visitors find the grave site. Melanie Milam Roth of Northrup, Colorado, will be in contact with the owner of the cemetery to find out what, if any, policies he might have regarding signs.

Buffalo Bill Historical Center. The Association is interested in increasing Texas Jack's visibility at the Center. Thadd Turner of Deadwood and Scottsdale sent them a biography of Texas Jack earlier this year. In October, the curator met with Dennis and Julie Greene of Carmel, California, during a trip to California and expressed an interest in providing more information on Texas Jack at the Center. How the Association might assist her in this effort remains an open question.

Texas Jack Stamp

The Association has long been interested in persuading the postal service to issue a stamp commemorating Texas Jack, but has met with little success. In the current issue of the *Scout* Dennis Greene of Carmel, California, has provided a sample of a letter that members can send in support of this effort. If there is no response, the Association will terminate this project.

Texas Jack Bookmark

The Association is interested in publishing a bookmark with information about Texas Jack. John Omohundro of Hannawa Falls, New York, prepared a draft of the bookmark that has been approved by the Board of Directors. The Board is currently considering plans for its distribution.

Buckskin and Satin

The Association is interested in reissuing *Buckskin and Satin*, Texas Jack's biography by Herschel Logan in 1954. Michael Foster of Tampa, Florida, is preparing a proposal for the Board of Directors to consider funding in 2003.

**Texas Jack Association
Treasurers Report
R. C. Omohundro, Treas.
submitted 28 Aug., 2002**

Period: June 1, 2001- June 1, 2002

Bank balance June 7, 2001	\$7,983.41
INCOME	
Dues, donations, Roundup registration, merchandise	7909.00
EXPENSES	
Fence at Pleasure Hill Cemetery	311.00
Research assistant	49.00
Postage	459.80
Printing	2,812.07
Roundup deposits	750.00
Bank Analysis	2.11
	<hr/>
	\$4,384.43
Income minus expenses	\$3,524.57
Bank balance June 28, 2002	\$13,601.36



IT'S A BARGAIN!

- * Support the organization which promotes the memory of John B. "Texas Jack" Omohundro*
- * Receive the Texas Jack Scout three times a year*
- * Be eligible to attend the Roundup in Charlottesville*

Join or renew today

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

TO: