

January 2020

The Reminisce News

Arbor House Reminisce -151 48th Ave. SW Norman, OK 73072 – 405.310.2499



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The Texas Oil Boom

Texas is known around the world as a leading producer of oil, but this booming industry did not exist until January 10, 1901, when the black gold was struck at Spindletop in Beaumont. Spindletop Hill was a small hill of earth pushed upward by an underground dome of salt. Self-taught geologist Patillo Higgins suspected that oil might be hidden somewhere under Spindletop. The area was known for its sulfur springs and seeps of gas that could be lit on fire. Higgins convinced engineer Anthony Lucas to finance a drilling operation at Spindletop, but they soon ran out of money. Lucas, unwilling to give up on Spindletop, sought the support of Pennsylvania oilmen to continue his drilling. Higgins, sadly, was excluded from the deal. Too bad, too, because on that fateful January day, after drilling had reached 1,020 feet, Lucas struck oil. Texas had never seen such a geyser. Oil shot 150 feet into the air, making it the most powerful gusher ever struck. The Lucas Geyser, as the Spindletop find came to be known, was shooting off 100,000 barrels of oil a day, more than all the other oil wells in America. It took nine days before the gusher was brought under control.

Beaumont suddenly grew from a sleepy Gulf-Coast backwater into a Texas boomtown. Its population tripled in a mere three months. New oil companies formed and searched for new wells. Refineries sprang up all over the Gulf Coast. In its first year, Spindletop produced 3.5 million barrels of oil. In its second year, it produced 17.4 million. John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil, which had previously held a monopoly in the petroleum industry, was crushed by new Texas-based competitors like Texaco and Gulf Oil.

By 1904, production at Spindletop had declined significantly, dropping to 10,000 barrels per day. This prompted more drilling and more significant finds, but by World War I, oil production at Spindletop had mostly ceased. Texas, however, had changed forever, and the Texas oil boom became the engine that propelled the growth of America. Today, visitors to Beaumont can find the Boomtown Museum and its exhibits chronicling the lasting importance of the Lucas Geyser at Spindletop.

Hi-Yo, Silver!



On January 31, 1933, a Detroit radio station hit broadcasting gold when it aired the first episode of a western series called *The Lone Ranger*. It was an instant hit, and 2,956 radio episodes were produced, followed by a series of books and television shows, a half-dozen movies, and countless games and toys. *The Lone Ranger* phenomenon became a cultural touchstone for an American nation hungry to romanticize its Wild West roots.

Perhaps the greatest appeal of the Lone Ranger was in his strict moral code. He may have hidden behind his signature black mask, but he never hid his desire for truth and justice. The Lone Ranger always used perfect grammar and never swore or used slang. He never drank or smoked. Scenes never took place in rough saloons but in restaurants serving food rather than liquor. The Lone Ranger had a pistol, as any western hero should, but he never shot to kill. He instead used his gun to disarm others and bring them to jail. Criminals were never glamorized with wealth or fame, nor did they enjoy positions of power. These decisions were made deliberately by the show's creators, Fran Striker and George W. Trendle. They intended *The Lone Ranger* to be wholesome family entertainment with a hero destined to become an honorable American icon.

The Lone Ranger hit the American public during a particularly fragile time. Many Americans were suffering during the Great Depression and had lost faith in their government and social institutions. The public needed a working-class hero—an ordinary man with extraordinary abilities—who promised to protect those who couldn't help themselves and bring order to a lawless frontier. Such a hero was easily adaptable to any era or medium. As such, *The Lone Ranger* transitioned easily into books, television, and the big screen over the decades. While *The Lone Ranger* has suffered its critics, especially due to its depiction of Native Americans, the Lone Ranger himself has endured as a symbol of justice and truth.



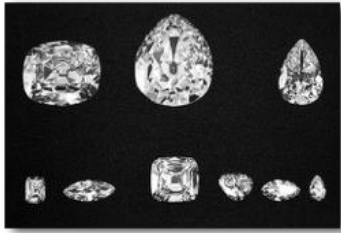


December was FUN and busy. We made candy, crafts and listened to Beautiful music from all the carolers that came to visit.

Christmas is a time to reflect on Family, Friends and being thankful for the true GIFT and meaning of Christmas.

A Big thank you to all the family members for making the Christmas party fun and memorable.

The Cullinan Diamond



On January 26, 1905, Frederick Wells, the surface manager of the Premier Mine in Transvaal, now South Africa, made one of the world's most

stunning discoveries. Just 29 feet below the surface, he found a massive, blue-white diamond, which he cut from the rock with his pocketknife. He immediately took it to his office to be weighed and inspected. At 3,106 carats, it was the largest diamond the world had ever seen. Newspapers called it the "Cullinan diamond," after Sir Thomas Cullinan, owner of the mine. It was such a fantastic discovery that it was put on public display at the Standard Bank in Johannesburg, where visitors could catch a glimpse of the world's largest diamond.

In April of that year, the Cullinan diamond was destined for London. A team of detectives guarded its transport on a steamboat, where it was locked securely inside the captain's safe... or so people thought. This, in fact, was a diversion. The real diamond was shipped to England in an unmarked box via regular post. Upon its safe arrival in England, it went to Buckingham Palace, where it was admired by King Edward VII. The Transvaal government had purchased the diamond and in 1907 presented it as a gift to His Majesty the King, who accepted it and declared that it would become part of the Crown Jewels.

Splitting and cutting the diamond into various workable pieces took eight months, with three people working 14 hours a day. It is said that Dutch diamond cutter Joseph Asscher had a doctor and nurse on hand while he was cleaving the massive diamond. Thank goodness, for he fainted after successfully dividing the gem. The two largest stones remain part of the Crown Jewels, set in the Sovereign's Sceptre with Cross and the Imperial State Crown, respectively. The seven remaining large stones and 95 smaller brilliant gems were set in various pieces of jewelry for the royal family.

Happy Birthday

Doris Gage 01/02
Clydette Hastings 01/02
Jacquita Hirschi 01/03
Albert Brooks 01/05
Byron Vaughn 01/22
Richard Mathewson 01/26

Carefriends/Staff

Joseph McIntosh 01/02
Paula Pashael 01/11
Erika Willoughby 01/12
Anna Ball 01/16
Ashley Shartzter 01/17
Jana White 01/20
Karla Boise 01/21
Brad Atkinson 01/25

