

This Week in Texas History

Rodeo champ was the real king of the cowboys

by **Bartee Haile**

The long reign of the real King of the Cowboys came to a sudden and tragic end on Oct. 20, 1947, when "Wild Horse Bob" Crosby died in a one-car crash near his New Mexico ranch.

Robert Anderson Crosby might never have been born had his father not played his cards right. The Texas Ranger eliminated his rival for the attentions of an Austin schoolteacher in a winner-takes-all hand of draw poker.

The lawman turned to ranching and moved to Midland, where Bob was born in 1897. He rode his first horse at the tender age

of three, when his father boosted him onto the saddle and gave him the choice to "stay put or fall off." The little boy stayed put.

An early chapter in the Crosby legend was written the day Bob, who could still count his years on his fingers, and older brother Harold roped 200 steers for a tick inspector. At 13 he entered his first rodeo and embarrassed 11 grown men by taking top honors in steer roping.

Not long after that a visiting celebrity told the teenager he was more than ready for the rodeo big time. Bob may have doubted the sincerity of Will Rogers' en-

couraging words or possibly felt it was time to put aside childish things. Wedding bells were right around the corner, and his father would need a full-time hand on the family's new cattle spread in New Mexico.

When bad weather and worse beef prices pushed the Crosbys to the brink of foreclosure in 1920, their banker came up with an ingenious way for them to make the mortgage payment. He suggested that young Bob test his storied talent at the annual rodeo in Yankee Stadium and advanced him \$250 for traveling expenses.

Under the circumstances, the nervous novice could hardly say no. He returned with \$1,250 in prize money, cash compensation for two blue ribbons, and a dream-come-true career. To prove the windfall was not beginner's

luck, he made the long trip back to New York the very next month and collected \$1,860 in winnings at Madison Square Garden.

By 1928 Crosby had earned enough on his rodeo rounds to pay off the mortgage on the family ranch. That was also the year he was given permanent custody of the Roosevelt Trophy, the annual honor bestowed on the cowboy scoring the most points at Pendleton and Cheyenne, after winning the coveted award for an unprecedented third time.

Crosby was a Jekyll and Hyde with spurs. Outside the arena he was a perfect gentleman who never gambled, drank hard liquor, smoked or chewed tobacco or uttered a four-letter word stronger than "foot." But inside the arena he was "Wild Horse Bob," a gladiator on horseback who would have been right at home in the Roman Coliseum.

Yet even those critics that objected to his hellbent-for-leather

tactics never questioned his extraordinary courage. Crosby proved in 1930 that he was not only the best all-around rodeo performer but the toughest as well.

In January a horse fell on him at Phoenix pulling a knee clean out of the socket. A month later at Tucson, a steer gored him in the thigh. With blood gushing out both sides of the skewered leg, he limped to his camp wagon and filled the gaping wound with coal oil. He saddled up the following day and rode to victory.

While practicing his steer-wrestling technique in April, Crosby caught a hoof in the face. A cowhand, who rushed to his aid, fainted at the gruesome sight of a dangling eyeball. Seventeen stitches in the eyelid and four more in the eyeball repaired the damage, but he had to endure two months of inactivity waiting for his vision to clear.

Four days after the doctors okayed Crosby for competition, he broke his leg at Prescott, Arizona. It was the fifth fracture for the accident-prone limb, and this time it developed gangrene.

Crosby went to the Mayo Clinic for treatment, where world-renowned specialists advised ampu-

tation. But the pig-headed patient changed his mind on the operating table and startled the surgical team with the gruff announcement that he was going home.

Back at his 50,000-acre ranch outside Roswell, Crosby asked his brother to call "the sorriest doctor you know." Harold grinned, "I know just the man. He hasn't had a case in two years."

The unpopular physician cut open the infected leg on the kitchen table, and "Wild Horse Bob" helped him scrape the bone with his trusty pocketknife. The home remedy must have done the trick because by fall the cowboy king again reigned supreme on the rodeo circuit.

Though 50 years old and forced by his insurance company to give up bulldogging and bronc riding, Crosby showed no sign of slowing down much less retiring. "I was born on a horse, and I want to die on a horse," the ageless wonder said in 1946 interview.

"Wild Horse Bob" Crosby died with his boots on alright, but he was holding a steering wheel instead of the reins. In the end, the highway was more hazardous to his health than the rodeo arena.

Zoobilee Preschool (Christian)
Training children to become the best they can be!

Sheryl Jackson
Director
310 North Leon Street
Groesbeck, Texas 76642
254-729-2823
slj3n1Joy@yahoo.com



COMMON GROUND COWBOY CHURCH

Sunday Service
10 AM
Located on Hwy 14
5 miles south of Kosse
5 miles north of Bremond

Terry Williams, Pastor
Cell: 979-676-1446

www.commongroundcowboychurch.org
"A place where sinners and Jesus Christ find common ground"

Church of Christ
201 S. Ellis St.-Groesbeck, TX 76642
(254) 729-5355
Ministers: Richard Williams & Charles Daily

ASSEMBLIES:

Sunday Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship.....10:20 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study.....7:00 p.m.

May We Be Of Service?

LOST PRAIRIE BAPTIST CHURCH
J.R. TAPLEY, PASTOR
(254) 729-5331 OR
CELL (903)-388-4414

Sunday School9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship10:45 a.m.
Evening Worship..... 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.
Third Sunday Gospel Singing.... 1:00 p.m.

"The end of your search for a friendly Church."

FM 3371 off Hwy. 164 East
Call if you need a ride 729-5331

First Baptist Church of Groesbeck

Rev. Clayton Griggs and the staff at First Baptist Church invite you to join us as we worship God and study His Word:

Sunday:

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Traditional Worship | 8:30 AM |
| Life Connection Bible Study | 9:40 AM |
| Celebration Worship | 10:50 AM |
| Life Discipleship Groups | 6:00 PM |

Monday:

| | |
|--------------------|---------|
| Ladies Bible Study | 6:30 PM |
|--------------------|---------|

Wednesday:

| | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Ladies Bible Study | 9:00 AM |
| AWANA – Children's Ministry | 6:00 PM |
| Youth Worship | 6:45 PM |
| Bible Study / Prayer Meeting | 7:00 PM |


306 North Ellis Street • 254-729-5120
www.fbcgroesbeck.com

1st United Methodist Church
203 W. State Street • Groesbeck
(254) 729-5137
Pastor: Ron Bellomy

Sunday Worship Times
10 a.m. • Praise
11 a.m. • Traditional



Hearts to Change the World!!!



CHURCH ON THE ROCK GROESBECK
1370 N. HWY 14

Pastor: Billy (Sonny) Bever

Sunday 10:30 AM
Nursery, Children's Church

Wednesday 7 PM
Nursery, Age Group Classes

Need a Ride?
We will pick you up!
Call 729-5200
One Hour before service

VICTORY BAPTIST CHURCH
A Church where there is a spirit of love.
Highway 14 • Groesbeck, Texas
Sunday School 9:45 Morning Worship 11:00
Sunday & Wednesday Night - 6:00 P.M. SBC
Nursery Available - Everyone is Welcome!

Billy Anderson, Pastor
Leonard Moore, Associate Pastor

Faith Lutheran Church



401 S. Hwy. 14-Mexia
Sunday Worship ... 9:30
Bible Class 11:00
562-7756
L.C.M.S.

Old Union Church
(Original Bldg.)
Bible Study & Sunday Worship
11 a.m.

LAKE LIMESTONE BAPTIST CHURCH
SBC

Johnny Layton, Pastor

Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Service 6:00 p.m.

Located on the Road to Lake Limestone Dam • East of 937
(903) 529-2222



Church of Christ at Old Union
5922 FM 937
Invites you to Sunday Services:

Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship.....5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Service.....6:00 p.m.

Hear The Gospel Each Sunday Morning @ 7:30 on Channel 44
Minister: Glenn Easterly • Church # 254-729-2600
Home # 254-729-9143

Bethel Baptist Church
Invites You To:

Sunday School - 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship - 10:45 a.m.
Evening Worship - 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Prayer Service - 6:00 p.m.

206 S. Grayson • Groesbeck

OLETHA BAPTIST CHURCH
Invites You To Services

Sunday Bible Study 10:00 a.m.
Worship Service 11:00 a.m.
Evening Service..... 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Service..... 6:00 p.m.

Bill Sutton, Pastor
729-5482
"An Old Time Country Church"


GROESBECK CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
Pastor Greg Sackett
FM 937 - Groesbeck, TX 76642
Phone: (254) 729-5817

Sunday Services:
Sunday Morning Worship 10:30am
Sunday Children's Church 10:30am

Wednesday Services:
Fellowship 7:00pm
Youth 8th - 12th 7:00pm
Young Youth 5th - 7th 7:00pm

There is nothing you can do to make God love you any more than He does right now, in whatever shape your life might be in. He just doesn't want you to stay that way. Come see what He has just for you.

Website Coming Soon!



Christ Episcopal Church



505 E. Commerce-Mexia
254-562-5918
Welcomes You

Sunday School 9:30am
Sunday Worship . 10:30am
Wed. Service..... 6:30pm

Word of Life Family Worship Center
P.O. Box 1031 193 LCR 412
(northside of Groesbeck High School)
Groesbeck, Texas 76642
(254) 729-2743 office (254) 729-2873 fax
email: wordoflifefamily@earthlink.net

SERVICE TIMES:

Sunday Morning Service..... 10:30 a.m.
K.I.D.S. Church..... 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday Evening Prayer..... 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday Evening Service..... 7:00 p.m.
Youth (Sudden Impact)..... 7:00 p.m.
His Kidz Club ages 5-10..... 7:00 p.m.

Pastors Randy & Linda Ayres invite you to come and experience the Difference. We have dynamic praise and worship along with the profound preaching of the Word of God. We also have many ministries in our church such as: Children's, Youth, Women's, Men's Harvest Fest, Golden Group and Young Adult's Group! So come and be a part of this great vision God has placed in this body.