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## PANHANDLE ALUMNI MEETING IS HELD AT ROMAN NOSE

— by Della Barnwell Whisenhunt

They came from Woodward, Rosston, Beaver, Weatherford, Stillwater, and Bartlesville, Oklahoma; they came from Midland, Texas; they came from Ashland, Kansas. In the late twenties, they had attended Panhandle A & M College (now Panhandle State University); and most of them had graduated from that institution. They had gotten together a few times since leaving PAMC; but this reunion at Roman Nose State Lodge in November 1982 was to be something special, and so it was.

These alumni reminisced; they looked at pictures; they thumbed through yearbooks of PAMC published when they were there more than fifty years before; they told jokes; they told tall tales; they toasted one another; some read Mrs. Robert Sexton's history of the Oklahoma Panhandle; some drove into Watonga to see the restored mansion of Thompson B. Ferguson, Oklahoma's sixth territorial governor; all accepted the invitation of Harold C. Groendyke, their former classmate, and spent a half day touring his ranch southwest of Watonga.

Groendyke had played football at PAMC; other former PAMC football players attending the reunion were Allen Williams, Henry White, Bus Gieck, and Floyd Whisenhunt.

I was the maverick of the group — a Sooner, yes, but one from the foothills of the Kiamichis in Southeast Oklahoma. Fortunately for me, all those Panhandle alumni graciously took me in; as I had lived since 1940 in Weatherford, I did not feel much like a foreigner. When I left the reunion at Roman Nose, I felt I had made many new friends.

My thoughts concerning them were also that they had been ready and willing to learn when years ago they had committed themselves to that Panhandle institution of higher learning; thus, that institution had much to work with; and it did a good job using its potential. Within this group, PAMC turned out the creator of what is now the largest tank-truck common carriers in the U.S., a county agent, a vo-ag teacher, a politician, a teacher of distributive education and shop, an English teacher, a medical doctor, a public-relations person, a soil-conservation-services worker, a rural mail carrier, and an ASCS official.

One of the presidents of PAMC in the twenties said, "A diploma from this college is a badge of excellence." By all appearances, his statement was correct.

The persons attending the Roman Nose Reunion were: Bert and Margaret (Manuel) Larason, Guymon and Flora Mae (Raines) Casey, Allen and Maxine (Settles) Williams, Henry and Ruth (Harrison) White, Floyd and Della (Barnwell) Whisenhunt, Ralph and Clarice (Coots) Gieck, Hazel (Etter) Snodgrass, Carrie (Powell) Roberts, Mike Dongan, Roy Etter, and Harold C. Groendyke. ■

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