# *Saddlebag* Newsletter - December 2023

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**A supplement to the WWHA *Journal***
**Available On-Line via www.wildwesthistory.org**

Welcome to the Saddlebag Newsletter. Here is the latest information from WWHA. Previously posted Saddlebag newsletters will be found by date further down this section in the list of available newsletters. All earlier information will be retained for reference.

If you have Wild West news, please contact the editor at the e-mail address shown at the top of the Saddlebag page. We reserve the right to include or not include any materials submitted to us.

Our YouTube page: https://www.youtube.com/@WildWestHistoryAssociation/videos is now monetized so WWHA gets paid for views**. Please subscribe, watch and like our videos, and you are contributing to WWHA. It is free and a win-win for WWHA.**

## Membership – Subscription Changes for 2024

**Members of the Wild West History Association, as well as those who simply "subscribe" to our publications with no intention of being a "voting member," will see some changes as we enter 2024. We have held-off for a good while on an increase in dues, subscription fees. We simply can't do that any longer and be the viable association that we, and you, want us to be.**

**Costs for virtually everything continue to rise. Our original intent in sustainability of our work and goals was 1) that our annual Roundup pays for itself with registration fees and the annual auction. We've been gratified that we've been able to see this be an on-going actuality, with only minimal fees increases over our seventeen years as WWHA. 2) It has been our intent that our publications pay for themselves via our membership dues and subscriptions. While we've had one or two increases in our dues over our 17 years, the past several years have seen us struggle to give our members/subscribers all that we can in the way of quality publications. We are now at the point that we must increase our dues to keep WWHA viable and not minimize anything that we have been offering.**

**So… starting January 1, 2024, the following changes will be made in our membership structure:**

**BASIC MEMBERSHIP**
**1 Year "Ranger" Membership (Digital Journals, Worldwide) $60.00 ***
**1 Year "Ranger" Membership $85.00 (USA)**
**2 Year "Ranger" Membership $150.00 (USA)**
**3 Year "Ranger" Membership $215.00 (USA)**

**FIRST STEP UP MEMBERSHIP**
**1 Year "Sheriff" Membership $175.00**
**Comes with a free Wild West book and book bag. This level is a "commitment" to WWHA of support and appreciation. Available only to USA addresses.**

**SECOND STEP UP MEMBERSHIP**
**1 Year "Gunfighter" Membership $300.00**
**2 Year "Gunfighter" Membership $550.00**
**3 Year "Gunfighter" Membership $800.00**
**The "Gunfighters" level will continue with the benefits they have been receiving. This level is a greater show of support to WWHA and comes with a lapel pin, certificate and the annual luncheon at the Roundup. Available only to USA addresses.**

**INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP**
**1 Year "International" Membership $175.00**
**(This has been the area of greatest postage costs and we have been "going in the hole" more and more each year.)**

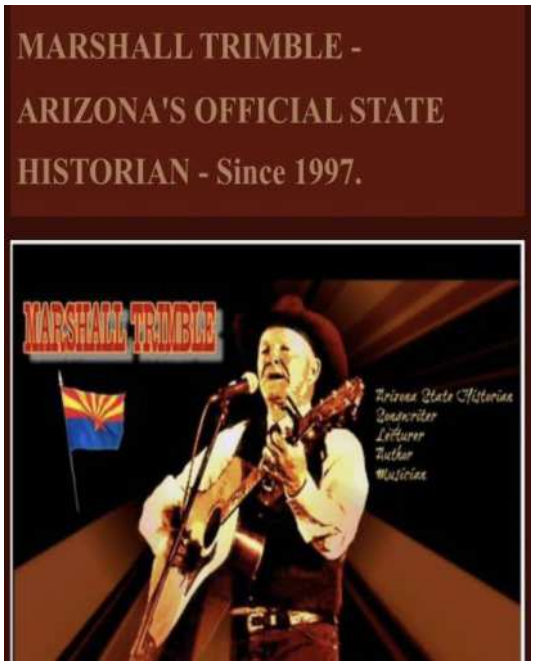
**SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP**
**1 Year "US Marshal" Membership $1,000 PLUS**
**For those members with a deep commitment to the purposes, focus and goals of WWHA.**

*** Finally, after much discussion, the WWHA Board of Directors has determined to offer, in addition to the above "hard copy mailing" memberships, a "digital" only membership/subscription starting with the March 2024 issue of the *Journal*. This is being offered at $60.00 per year, with a one year only membership until it can be determined if this new concept will be financially viable. For this level of membership, the *Journal* and the annual Roundup program will be sent via your supplied e-mail address while the *Saddlebag* will continue to be available via our website.**

**These changes are made reluctantly and we hope all of our current members will agree that with constantly rising costs in our publications, we simply have no other choice if we are to continue to provide our readers with the "best" in Wild West history. From now until December 31st, new memberships and renewals will be accepted at the current rates (see *Journal* contents page).**

## Marshall Trimble

WWHA member, and retired Board Member, Marshall Trimble, was given the 2023 Western Heritage Award, at the Prescott Western Heritage Museum, on Whiskey Row, in Prescott, Arizona. There motto is “Educate, Celebrate, Preserve and Promote” our western heritage. Marshall has been the official Arizona State Historian since 1997. That is quite an honor and well deserved. Marshall is a hard-working historian, musician and public speaker as well as a good friend to WWHA. He is also a really fun and nice person.




## Troy Lynn Marler

Troy Lynn Marler, 83, passed away on November 28, 2023, in Montgomery, TX. He was born on November 17, 1940, in Hineston, LA. Troy was a loving, kind, and generous man who cared for his family and friends deeply.
Troy is survived by his partner of 31 years, Carmen Wainwright. He is also survived by his daughters, Phyllis Marler Williams (Mike) and Karen Marler Rasor (Mike), and his grandchildren, Griffin Rasor, Shelby Williams, Alexis (Joseph) Chancellor, and Parker Williams. His brother, O.C. Marler, also survives him and a niece, Kimberly Marler Taylor and 2 nephews, Forrest Marler and Tim Marler. He was preceded in death by his parents, Grayerson and Bertha Dyess Marler, and his brother, Don C. Marler.
Troy received his Bachelor's degree in Education from Northwestern State University of Louisiana and a Master of Education from Stephen F. Austin University with a Principal certification. He had a career as a teacher and Administrator with the Bridge City, Houston, Conroe, and Crosby Independent School Districts with a focus on Special Education, an Administrator of Special Texas Homes, an Instructor for Dale Carnegie, Inc., and an Instructor at Houston Community College. He was also a successful real estate entrepreneur for over 50 years.
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Administrator with the Bridge City, Houston, Conroe, and Crosby Independent School Districts with a focus on Special Education, an Administrator of Special Texas Homes, an Instructor for Dale Carnegie, Inc., and an Instructor at Houston Community College. He was also a successful real estate entrepreneur for over 50 years. In his free time, Troy was an active member of the Wild West History Association. This group was very near and dear to his heart and the annual "Roundup" was a highlight of every summer. He was also active in the Conroe Noon Lions Club and the East Texas Historical Association. Troy took great pride in being a member of the Sons of the American Revolution and passing that honor to his children and grandchildren. He had a passion for traveling the world and capturing exquisite photographs. He loved to participate in the April Sound Photo Club and gave several presentations of his travel photographs.

A memorial service to celebrate Troy's life will be held on December 9, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. at the April Sound Church, 67-1/2 April Wind South, Montgomery, TX 77356.

Troy L. Marler will be deeply missed by all that knew him. His dry wit, dedication to family, and zest for life will forever be Troy Lynn Marler, 83, passed away on November 28, 2023, in Montgomery, TX. He was born on November 17, 1940, in Hineston, LA. Troy was a loving, kind, and generous man who cared for his family and friends, deeply.

## Regional Roundup TEXAS

Ron Woggon and Jean Smith are working on a display, talk and regional Roundup in Boerne, Texas, in March, centered around Fred Dodge. The library will present the display, where they have graciously agreed to provide a room for our meeting. We will be sure and keep you informed when we have all the details. It will be a one-day event and we hope some of our Texas members will be able to attend.

WWHA member David Guyton has been busy promoting WWHA events in the South. Here is a picture of a table he set up at events in Soddy Daisey, Tennessee and the Booth Western Art Museum in Cartersville, Georgia. THANKS DAVID for Promoting the WWHA!

The 2024 WWHA **Winter Board Meeting** will be held on Thursday, January 25, at 2 p.m. at the Westgate Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada.

## WWHA YOUTUBE CHANNEL

December 1, 2023: **Ben Thompson, The Deadliest Gunfighter**, Kurt House tells the story.
December 15, 2023: **Reuben Smith**, Texas Ranger and cattle rancher lost his long red locks to a Comanche scalping knife.
January 1, 2024**: Peter Brand** "From Lawmen to Outlaws: Peter Brand Delves into the Intriguing World of the Wild West"

# Charles Meriwether "Charlie" Bowdre

## Lincoln County Regulator, Cowboy and Gunfighter

### "Identifying Manuela, the Lady in the Blood-Stained Image "

Over the years, many American West enthusiasts and historians have had cause to question the supposed identity of the young Mexican woman that appeared alongside cowboy, rancher, gunfighter, and Lincoln County "Regulator" Charlie Bowdre in the now widely circulated c1880 blood-stained ferrotype taken from Bowdre's pocket after he was killed by Sheriff Pat Garrett and posse at Stinking Springs, NM, in 1880. The blood-stained ferrotype shows a heavily armed Bowdre and his young Mexican wife, whose given name was "Manuela."

In Sheriff Pat Garrett's 1882 book, *The Authentic Life of Billy, The Kid*, Garrett refers to her only as "Bowdre's wife." From the original book: "When we did walk up to the ranch, unopposed, our precautions appeared rather ludicrous to us, as we only found Bowdre's wife and another Mexican woman, who hailed our advent with "terror-born lamentations."

Almost a century later in a revision of *The Authentic Life of Billy, The Kid* someone added: “Manuela Herrera, the daughter of Fernando Herrera and his second wife and a half-sister to Doc Scurlock’s wife Antonia.” This miss-identification in the revision of Garrett’s book appears to be the sole source for Manuela Herrera becoming the widely accepted identity of Bowdre’s wife.
Upon close examination of the ferrotype and known information about Manuela Herrera, there are a number of problems with the Manuela “Herrera” identification. The 1880 US Census, New Mexico, listed Charlie Bowdre (age 32) and his wife, “Manuela” (age 25).

In the 1870 US Census, New Mexico, Manuela DeHerrera (age 5) was listed as a daughter in the household of Fernando (age 33) and Juliana DeHerrera (age 34). This would have made Manuela Herrera’s date of birth c1865 or 1866 and about 12 or 13-years-old if she married Bowdre in 1878 or 1879. The 1885 territorial census lists Manuela (Herrera) Corona and her husband Maxamino Corona. They were married in 1884 and had a new born son named Manuel. They lived in Tularosa; this was considered Dona Ana County at that time.
From the Herrera Family book: "On February 25, 1884 Manuelita married Maximiliano Corona in Tularoso at la Iglesia de San Francisco de Paula. Maximiliano was originally from Casas Grandes, La República de México. After the two married, they lived on Gregorio Ybarra’s ranchito. Maximiliano fathered three children with Manuelita, one son and two daughters. Their names were Manuel, Dorotea and Elena."
The young Mexican woman in the ferrotype standing next to Bowdre is obviously not a 12- or 13-year-old child bride. In fact, she appears to be a mature woman consistent with the age of Manuela Bowdre in the 1880 New Mexico Census. Other evidence confirming Manuela Herrera’s age is her 1939, New Mexico Certificate of Death #5315363, filed in 1939 under the name of Manuelita Salsberry (a daughter of Fernando and Julianita Herrera and the spouse of Jimmy Salsberry and an 1866 date of birth).

Clearly, Manuela Herrera was not Charlie Bowdre's wife or the young Mexican woman standing next to Bowdre in the c1880 blood-stained ferrotype.

So, if Manuela Herrera was not Bowdre's wife or the young Mexican woman standing next to him in the c1880 ferrotype, who was?

In Walter Noble Burns' book, *The Saga of Billy the Kid*, published in 1926, Paulita Maxwell Jaramillo of Old Fort Sumner said the following about Charlie's wife in a 1923 interview with the author: "Manuela Bowdre, Charlie Bowdre's wife, was a dark, glowing, slender little creature of high spirits. Poor girl, it broke her heart when Charlie Bowdre was killed by Pat Garrett and his man-hunters. But time mends broken hearts and Manuela married Lafe Holcomb, a cow-puncher, and was living over in the Capitans when I last heard of her."

Paulita Maxwell Jaramillo is deemed a creditable source. She and her brother, Peter "Pete" "Pedro" Maxwell, were friends with Billy the Kid (BTK), Bowdre and other members of the Lincoln County Regulators. The Regulators often visited Fort Sumner to see friends or attend social gatherings. In addition, Fort Sumner was a place the Regulators fled when pursued by opposing forces. Pete Maxwell even hired Charlie Bowdre to work on the Maxwell ranch as a cowboy, and it was in Maxwell's home in Fort Sumner that BTK met his death at the hands of Sheriff Pat Garrett.

Paulita (Maxwell) Jaramillo's information appears to be substantiated by the 1885 New Mexico Census, Fort Sumner, San Miguel, where Lafayette Holcomb, age 24, was listed as a "boarder" in the household of Manuela Gonzales, age 33, along with her daughter, Zenaida Gonzales, age 2. Manuela Gonzales' place of birth was listed as Old Mexico and her marital status as "divorced."

At his death, Charlie Bowdre left property and/or assets in both the NM Territory and the State of Mississippi; therefore, probate proceedings were held in each jurisdiction. A review of March 1889 probate proceedings in Chancery Court, Hernando, DeSoto County, Mississippi, determined that attorney D. W. Dockery was appointed administrator of Bowdre's estate. Bowdre's only listed heirs were his brothers and sisters. There was no mention of a surviving spouse in any of Bowdre's

Mississippi Chancery Court proceedings If Gonzales and Bowdre were indeed married, she did not challenge Charlie's estate proceedings in Mississippi.

Also in March 1881, probate proceedings occurred in the New Mexico Territory, County of San Miguel. A review of these records, which we translated from Spanish to English, determined that Peter Maxwell (brother of Paulita (Maxwell) Jaramillo) was listed as principal and guarantor of Bowdre's estate and signed by Peter "Pedro" Maxwell, ***Manuela Gonzales***, Felipe Baca and Lorenzo Lopez

## CONCLUSION

Based on available evidence, Manuela Herrera was not the wife of Charlie Bowdre or the young Mexican woman that appeared standing next to him in the c1880 blood-stained ferrotype. All evidence points to Manuela Gonzales.

## A FINAL NOTE

(Note: An optional idea to promote a future article)

Charlie Bowdre is a really interesting post-Civil War western era character. His complete story has not been told, nor his character accurately portrayed in articles, books or films. Before his exploits as a "pal of BTK," Lincoln County Regulator, cowboy, and gunfighter, Bowdre's life was centered around his family's 8,000 plus acre cotton plantation in the Mississippi Delta; cotton brokerage business in nearby Memphis, TN; and attending the University of Mississippi. Our research is ongoing, and we hope to publish a complete story about the life and times of Charlie Bowdre, and possibly his wife, Manuela, in the near future.

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**Media Release – December 1, 2023**

The Wild West History Association (WWHA) is pleased to announce the completed installation of a grave marker for Frank Stewart (alias of John Wallace Green) in Raton, New Mexico. Stewart was the co-leader, with Pat Garrett, of the posse that captured Billy the Kid and his small group of cohorts at Stinking Spring, east of Fort Sumner, on December 23, 1880.

Stewart/Green died intestate on May 11, 1935, and his body was interred in the Raton, New Mexico, City Cemetery. For many years, historians tried to find his death date and burial site, with no luck. Then, unavailable by any means other than searching years of newspaper issues, via microfilm, in the May 13, 1935, edition of the *Raton Range*, the very brief announcement of his death was found - minus any accolades or the slightest mention of the important role the man had played in the chase and capture of Billy the Kid.

The full story of the life of Frank Stewart/John Green was unknown until the 2022 publication of the book *Chasing Billy the Kid: The Untold Story of the Manhunt for William H. Bonney*, by historians Kurt House and Roy B. Young (Three Rivers Publishing). During their work and research into Stewart/Green's life, the two authors determined that 'if and when' the location of the man's grave could be determined, they would work with WWHA to see that it was finally marked with an appropriate tombstone and epitaph.

Knowing that Stewart/Green was buried in Raton, House and Young made a trip there in 2022 to investigate the exact cemetery and hopefully the exact plot in the cemetery. Meeting with several knowledgeable local citizens, cemetery sextons, funeral home directors, and city officials, the cemetery was identified but no record could be found of the exact unmarked plot. Through the courtesy and historic interest of the cemetery sexton, a most desirable unused plot was selected to honor Stewart/Green with a grave marker.

The original plan was to have a dedication ceremony at the cemetery in the fall of 2023, but due to an unforeseen delay in getting the marker engraved and installed, the ceremony will be scheduled at a soon to be determined date in the coming

spring of 2024. An announcement will be forthcoming relating the details of the ceremony.

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Wild West History Association
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