

Author Bill Neal earns second Rupert N. Richardson award

For a second consecutive year, the West Texas Historical Association has recognized Hardeman County native Bill Neal with its Rupert Norval Richardson Award for the best book on West Texas history.

Neal's *From Guns to Gavels* is his latest book to be so honored. The first was in 2007, when *Getting Away with Murder on the Texas Frontier* also earned the Richardson recognition.

The two books are the first

two-thirds of a trilogy. A third book, *Sex, Murder and the Unwritten Law*, is at the Texas Tech presses now. Publication will be in the fall.

Neal's latest Richardson Award came at the WTHA Annual Conference in Lubbock. Richardson, a noted Texas historian, was both president and professor emeritus at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, and he was long-time editor and director of the West Texas Historical Association.

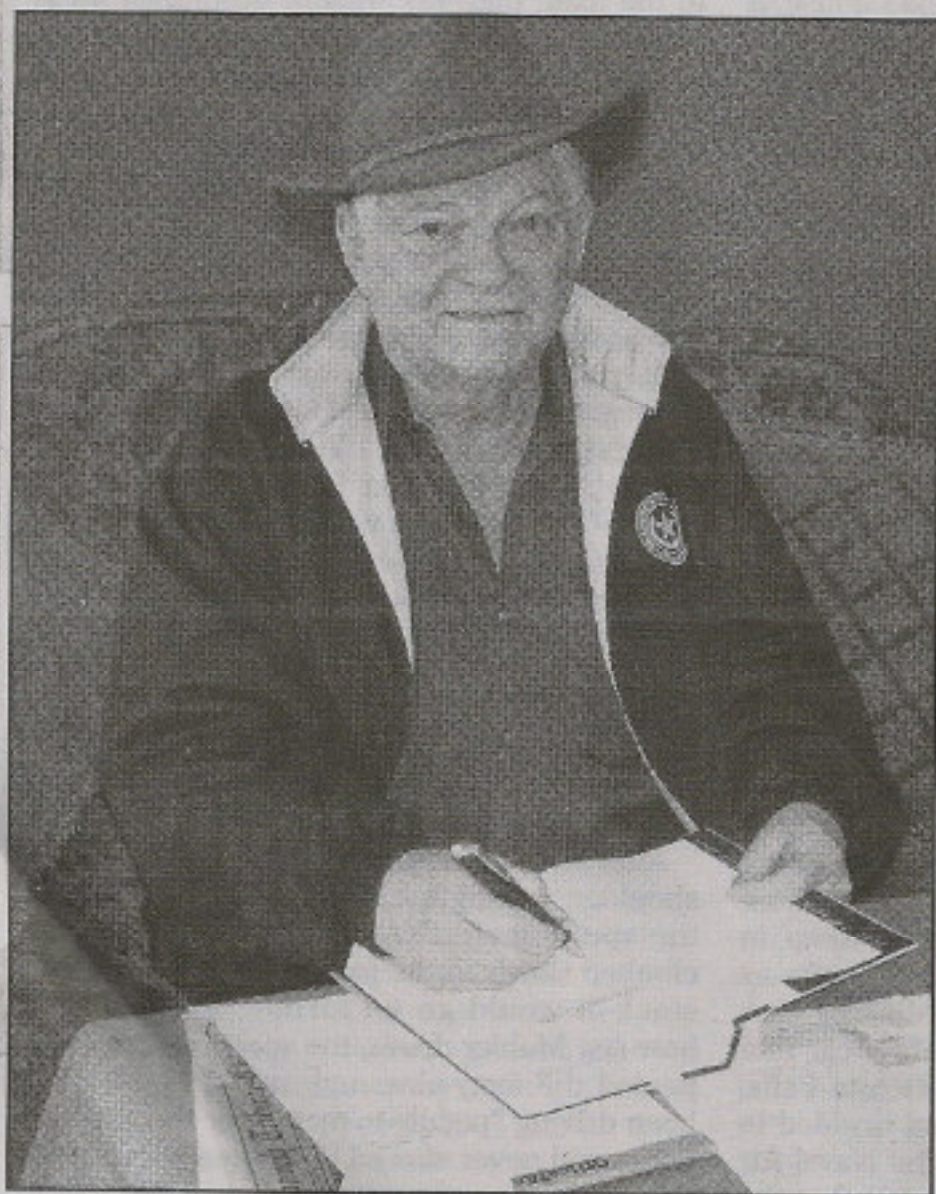
Richardson is considered one of the preeminent Texas and Western historians and authored numerous books including *The Comanche Barrier to South Plains Settlement* (1933) and a history textbook, *Texas: The Lone Star State* (1943) that eventually went through five editions.

The Rupert N. Richardson Award, established in 1996, goes to a book that focuses on West Texas history. Eligible books are to have been published within the past two years. To be eligible, an individual must have been a member of the Association for at least one full year prior to the application deadline. The award winner receives a \$500 cash award and a certificate.

Bill Neal is an H-SU alumnus and a former student of Richardson's, graduating in 1957, and was editor of the school newspaper, *The Brand*, when A.C. Greene was a professor there. Both Neal and Greene later worked at the same time for the *Abilene Reporter-News*.

Neal graduated from the University of Texas School of Law in 1964, and spent 40 years in the justice system of West Texas - 20 years as district attorney for two districts and 20 in private practice in his native Quanah.

Copies of *From Guns to Gavels* are available for sale at the *Quanah Tribune-Chief*. Currently, the first book, *Getting Away with Murder on the Texas Frontier*, is sold out at the newspaper office, but if there is sufficient interest, an order for more will be placed.



BILL NEAL...at an autograph party here in December
(Quanah Tribune-Chief photo)