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Frankly Speaking –

The Camel Highway That Became Route 66!

by Frank Jordan

Except for a Civil War and development of the railroads in the Old West, the Lone Ranger and Roy Rogers might have ridden their favorite trusty camel instead of Silver and Trigger!

A rapid mount on a hero's horse would have come with a caution sign if there had been a hump instead of a saddle horn to consider!

For these foreign creatures, "hump" day was every day, with a fascinating brief history in yesteryears of the Camel Corp.

In the 1850s, few trails for

travel and commerce existed in U.S. territories recently attained from Mexico. Lieutenant Edward F. Beale in 1857 led a camel expedition to survey his acquired rights to what was first Beale Road, a dusty trail from southwest Texas to near Los Angeles, California. Beales' road eventually became the famous Route 66! But we need to go back several years to explore the camel's attempted conquest of the Wild West.

The primary problem for the U.S. military trying to tame these new lands was not Indians, but animals for transport that could exist in the hot, arid climate with scant natural food sources. A man named Gwinn Harris Heap promoted camels as a cheap and effective transportation compared to mules.

One news report stated, "They (camels) were found capable of packing 1,000 pounds weight apiece and of traveling with their load from 30 to 40 miles a day, all the while finding their own feed over an almost barren country. Their drivers say that they will get fat where a jackass would starve to death."

One person who believed Heap was Jefferson Davis as U.S. Secretary of War at the time prior to the Civil War. In 1855, an experimental herd of camels was

authorized to be acquired from Africa with \$30,000 allocated for the military exploits of the new Camel Corp.

The camels were purchased in Africa and then transported across the Atlantic on the ship, Supply. Thirty-four camels arrived in Indianola near Port Lavaca, Texas, on May 14, 1856, reporting for service and delivery to Camp Verde, Texas, near San Antonio. Forty more arrived eventually.

A big "oops" occurred when it was realized the camels did not know English and responded to voice commands, only if voiced in Arabic! Two Arabs and three Turks were hired as camel tenders to communicate with the camels in their native tongues.

An observer of events recalled, "Secretary of War Davis reported a contest between a mule-driven wagon train and the unencumbered camels; they set out for supplies in San Antonio, 60 miles away. Six camels returned, carrying a total of 3,648 pounds, equal to two wagons drawn by six mules apiece. They made the trip in two days and six hours, whereas the wagons had taken four days and 30 minutes."

Camels, in spite of bad breath, nasty personal hygiene and a challenging dismount, were in!

Edward F. Beale resigned his commission in the Navy and obtained a road construction contract to link Fort Defiance to the California border for his camels. Parts of Beale's 1857 camel route

became the basis for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad placement and for the famous Route 66.

While horses and mules were terrified of the camels, so also were Indians who frequently would raid and steal horses and mules, but never a camel! In the end, what doomed the great camel experiment was not the camels' abilities as beasts of burden, but the coming of the railroads plus the Civil War that temporarily deferred interest in the westward movement.

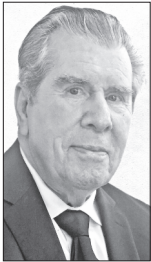
Note, Nevada passed a law in 1875 still on the books that prohibited camels on public highways and it has worked! Frankly speaking, you may not be willing to walk a mile for a camel, but for the camels in the southwest in the 1850s every day was "hump" day as they walked 37 miles while carrying 3,648 pounds for you!

Melgoza graduates from UT Tyler

TYLER, TX - Emmanuel Melgoza of Dayton has graduated with a Master of Business Administration from The University of Texas Tyler Soules College of Business. Students were awarded degrees Saturday, August 14, during commencement ceremonies held at the UT Tyler Herrington Patriot Center.

• LOWELL CARRAWAY

DAYTON - Lowell Jan Carraway, the sixth of eight children of Sam and Lydia Carraway, was born on July 4,



1936, in Snow Hill, North Carolina and, after a long illness, passed away peacefully on August 7, 2026, at the age of 90.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Lydia Ethel and Sam Reynolds Carraway; his five brothers, Sam, Stuart, Cecil, Charles, and Gerald Carraway; his two sisters, Jamie Carraway Stocks and Bessie Carraway Price. He was also preceded in death by his beloved wife of 52 years, mother of his children, Sondra Jansen Carraway, and his son-in-law, Freddy Munoz.

He is survived by his wife of 12 years, Betty Jean Stoesser Carraway; his two daughters, Sabra Jan Carraway King of Dayton and Rhonda Jean Carraway Munoz of Mont Belvieu; four grandchildren, Erika King Hall and husband Andrew of Dayton; Kraig Austin King and wife Cortny of Montgomery; Shane Williams of Dayton; Sarah Blanchard and husband Ricky of Mont Belvieu. Also surviving are six great-grandchildren, Elijah Williams and wife Abby; Gavin Williams; Carter Paul Blanchard; Rafe Keith Blanchard; Rose Austin King; and Lainey Lynn King; and sister-in-law, Gwen Car-

raway of Kinston, North Carolina. Others include stepsons, John Edward Griffin of San Antonio, and Greg Phillip Griffin and wife Katherine, and their sons, Zachary Joseph Griffin and Caleb Micah Griffin of Portland, Oregon.

After graduating from Snow Hill High School in eastern North Carolina, Lowell enlisted in the United States Air Force, serving from 1954 to 1958, including one year in the Arctic region of Thule Air Force Base in Greenland. After being honorably discharged from the military, Lowell moved to Texas where he graduated from the University of Houston with a degree in Law and Economics. He married Sondra Jean Jansen in 1960, and they lived in several Texas cities. While in Lubbock, he served as a pilot with the Civil Air Patrol, flying missions along the Texas-Mexico border in search of illegal drug traffickers.

Lowell attended Trinity Theological Seminary in Newburg, Indiana, where he graduated with a Master of Arts degree and was awarded a "Pastoral Ministry with Distinction" diploma, eventually earning his Doctor of Philosophy degree from Tyndale Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. Lowell continually "searched the Scriptures daily" and witnessed great things in the lives of people with whom he shared God's Word. Dr. Carraway was a member of First Baptist Church, Dayton, and enjoyed many years teaching Bible

classes there.

While in Houston and Lubbock, he was employed by Southwestern Bell and pastored churches in Lubbock and later in Dayton, McAllen, and Votaw. The emphasis of Dr. Carraway's ministry created 35 years of intermittent mission work in Kenya and South Africa where he loved preaching in the "bush" – the wild, undeveloped land outside the cities in Kenya. He oversaw the construction of 10 churches in the Rift Valley area of Kenya, as well as a seminary in East Kenya near the border of Tanzania. He also taught at Kenya's Theological College at Brackenhurst.

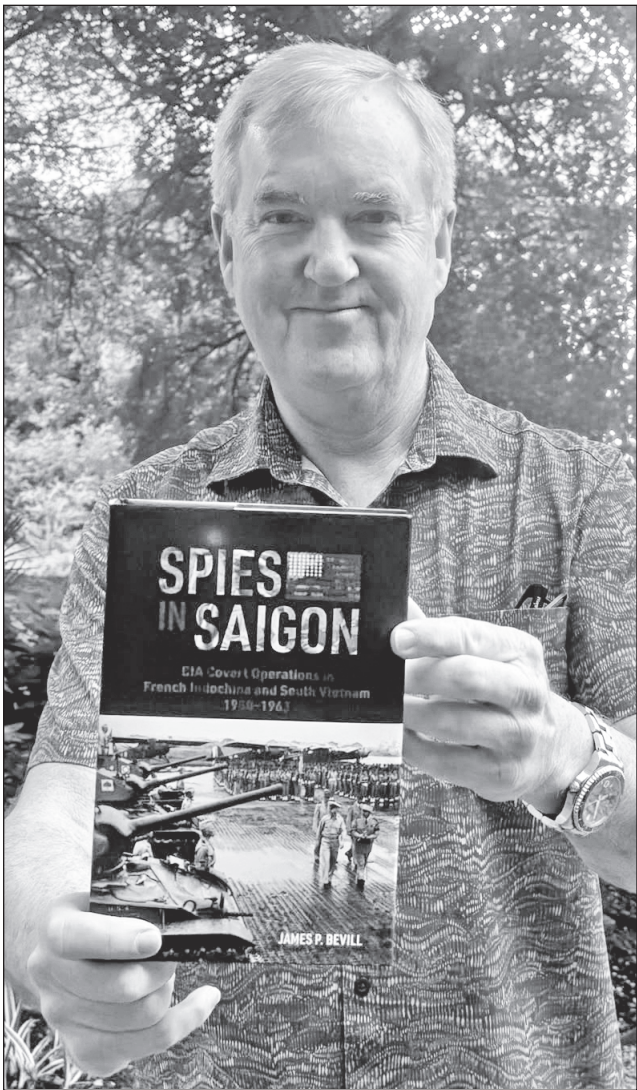
Sincere love and appreciation is extended to the wonderful friends and family who through prayers, cards, food and many other acts of kindness, brought tears of joy and loving memories throughout the last days we shared with our beloved Lowell. We are also grateful for the loving care provided by our cherished nurse, Lorraine Orasco and by the caregivers of Gentiva Hospice. We were wonderfully blessed each step of the way. He will be missed by each member of his family and many other relatives and friends here, as well as those in Kenya, South Africa, Spain, Costa Rica and all over the world, who first heard the Word of God from "Brother Lowell."

A funeral service was held Tuesday, August 11, at the Pace-Stancil Funeral Home at 1 p.m. in Dayton

LHS wins \$5,000 through T-Mobile program

LIBERTY - Liberty High School is one of 34 Texas high schools to win \$5,000 through T-Mobile's Friday Night 5G Lights program. The money can be used for needs such as new helmets, weight room equipment, uniforms or travel costs. Now in its third season, Friday Night 5G Lights supports smaller communities where high school football is often the center of Friday night life.

In addition to the \$5,000 already received, the school now has a chance to compete for additional prizes including: \$25,000 to be awarded to 40 regional finalists. Four division champions will win \$250,000 each, and one school will receive the \$1 million field upgrade. Visit FridayNight5GLights.com to learn more.



AUTHOR JAMES BEVELL

Spies in Saigon author at Wallisville

WALLISVILLE - The History & Then Some Lecture Series at the Chambers County Museum at Wallisville continues Thursday, September 17, at 6 p.m.

Guest speaker James Bevell will present his book Spies in Saigon, a fascinating insight that brings to life gripping stories of the dangerous world of undercover spies, double agents, and covert CIA operations in Saigon, Vietnam, dur-

ing the French-Indochina War. This untold prequel to the American war reveals the surprising depth of American and CIA involvement during the French War and the creation of the first Republic of Vietnam, which followed.

Bevell lives in Houston with his wife, Jodie Springer Bevell. He is senior vice president at UBS Financial Services in River Oaks.

Seating is limited, so make your reservation today. Presentations of the History & Then Some series are held the third Thursday of each month. For more information, call 409-389-2252. The Chambers County Museum at Wallisville is located at 20136 IH-10 East.

CLOTHES/FOOD PANTRY OPEN SATURDAY

LIBERTY - The clothes and food pantry ministry of St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church is open every Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The pantry offers food and clothing free of charge to all those in need who qualify. The pantry is located in the ministry building across from the Liberty-Dayton Regional Medical Center Hospital, next to the hospital helipad. Clothing donations are always accepted. For information, call Sister Williams at 409-208-1073 .



Liberty
Church of Christ



Bryant Perkins,
Minister

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