

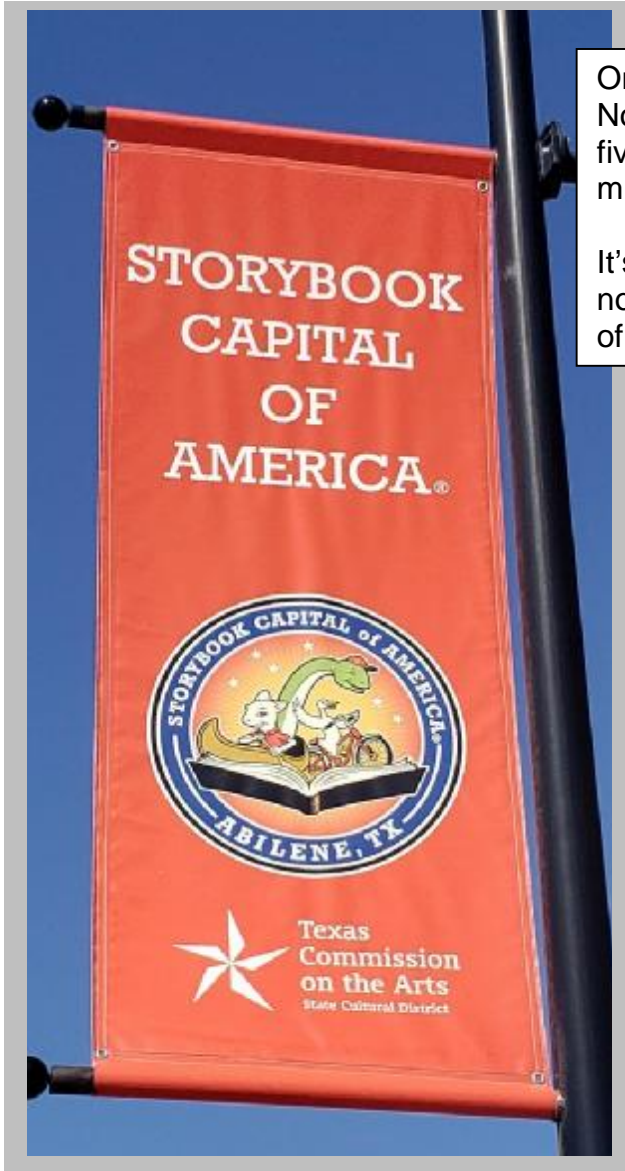


In Search of El dorado

A daily journal of my travels and adventures in my.....Search for Eldorado

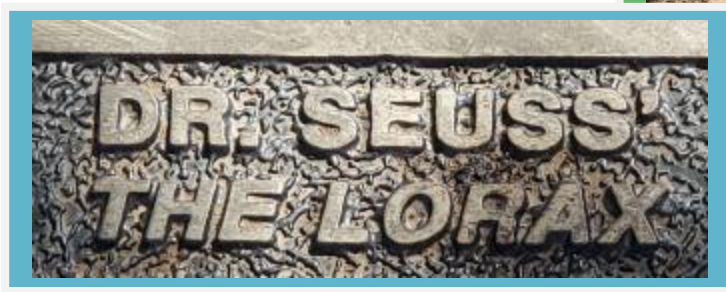
Hello to Family & Friends

Wednesday, March 10th 2021 Day 52



One of the best things about Abilene is finding a parking spot. No meters. No pay lots. No Apps to figure out. It took me all of five minutes to park behind a Pepsi delivery truck right in the middle of downtown Abilene.

It's a beautiful day for a walk, so let me lead you down a path of nostalgia to your childhood as we visit the Storybook Sculptures of Abilene, Texas.



Unfortunately, several of the sculptures face the north and west, making me look directly into the sun or from an angle to take a picture. I even turned the flash on for this one.

Yertle the Turtle

THEN Yertle the Turtle
was perched up so high.
He could see forty miles
from his throne in the sky!
"Hooray!" shouted Yertle.
"I'm king of the trees!
I'm king of the birds!
And I'm king of the bees!
I'm king of the butterflies!
King of the air!
Ah, me! What a throne!
What a wonderful chair!
I'm Yertle the Turtle!
Oh, marvelous me!
For I am the ruler of all that I see!"



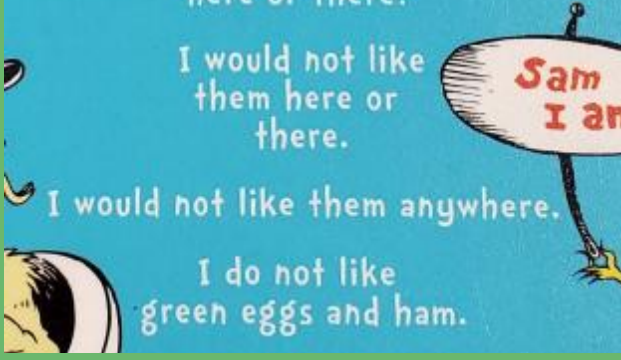
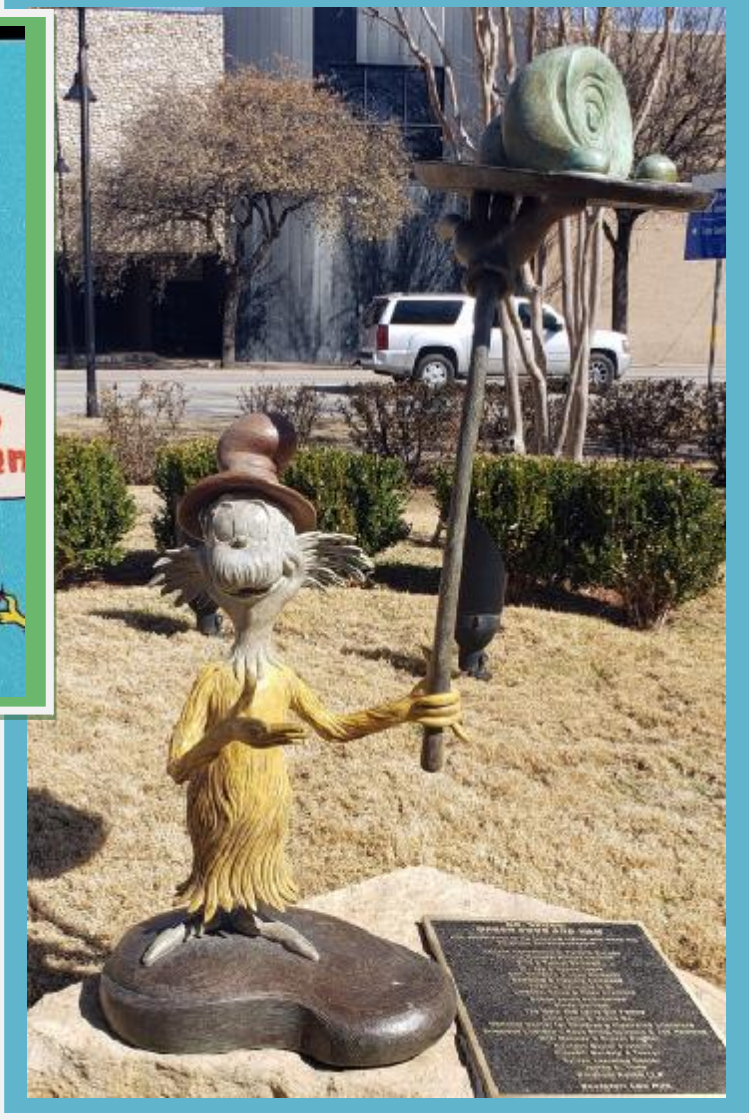
How the Grinch Stole Christmas!

And what happened then...?
Well...in Who-ville they say
That the Grinch's small heart
Grew three sizes that day!
And the minute his heart
didn't feel quite so tight,
He whizzed with this load
through the bright morning light!
And he brought back the toys!
And the food for the feast!
And he...HE HIMSELF...!
The Grinch carved the roast beast!

Yertle the Turtle was one of my favorites as a kid. I had a picture book and an album with his story on it. I think it had Bartholomew and the Oobleck on the flip side. I would listen to it at night when I went to sleep. I wore that record out.

It's a must to watch the original Grinch every Christmas.

Green Eggs and Ham
 Do you like green eggs and ham?
 I do not like them. Sam-I-am.
 I do not like green eggs and ham.
 Would you like them
 here or there?
 I would not like
 them here or
 there.
 I would not like them anywhere.
 I do not like
 green eggs and ham.

The Cat in the Hat

We looked!
 Then we saw him step in on the mat!
 We looked!
 And we saw him!
 The Cat in the Hat!
 And he said to us,

"Why do you sit there like that?"
 "I know it is wet
 And the sun is not sunny.
 But we can have
 Lots of good fun that is funny!"

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This one was really cute.



Horton Hears a Who

Through the high jungle tree tops, the news quickly spread:
"He talks to a dust speck! He's out of his head!
Just look at him walk
with that speck on that flower!"
And Horton walked, worrying, almost an hour.
"Should I put this speck down?..."
Horton thought with alarm.
"If I do, these small persons may
come to great harm.
I can't put it down.
And I won't! After all
A person's a person.
No matter how small."



That's the last of the Dr. Seuss exhibits. I could not find a plaque for this one, but since I had a copy of the Children's Adventure Guide I can tell you about it.

Childhood's Great Adventure, from the book SANTA CALLS by William Joyce.



Man in the Moon from the book, you guessed it, MAN IN THE MOON.



E. Aster Bunnymund from the book E. ASTER BUNNYMUND AND THE WARRIOR EGGS AT THE EARTH'S CORE. I have never heard of any of the books on this page, but the Duck on a Bike sounds like it might be a fun one. (E. Aster – Easter – get it)



Duck on a Bike
Based on the book "Duck on a Bike"
by David Shannon

Never heard of this one either.

Abilene, TX
David & Fergus
Based on the book "David Gets in Trouble"
by David Shannon



Some of you may be getting the idea that I neglected my children by not reading them these stories I never heard of, but you would be wrong. We read a lot of Disney books.

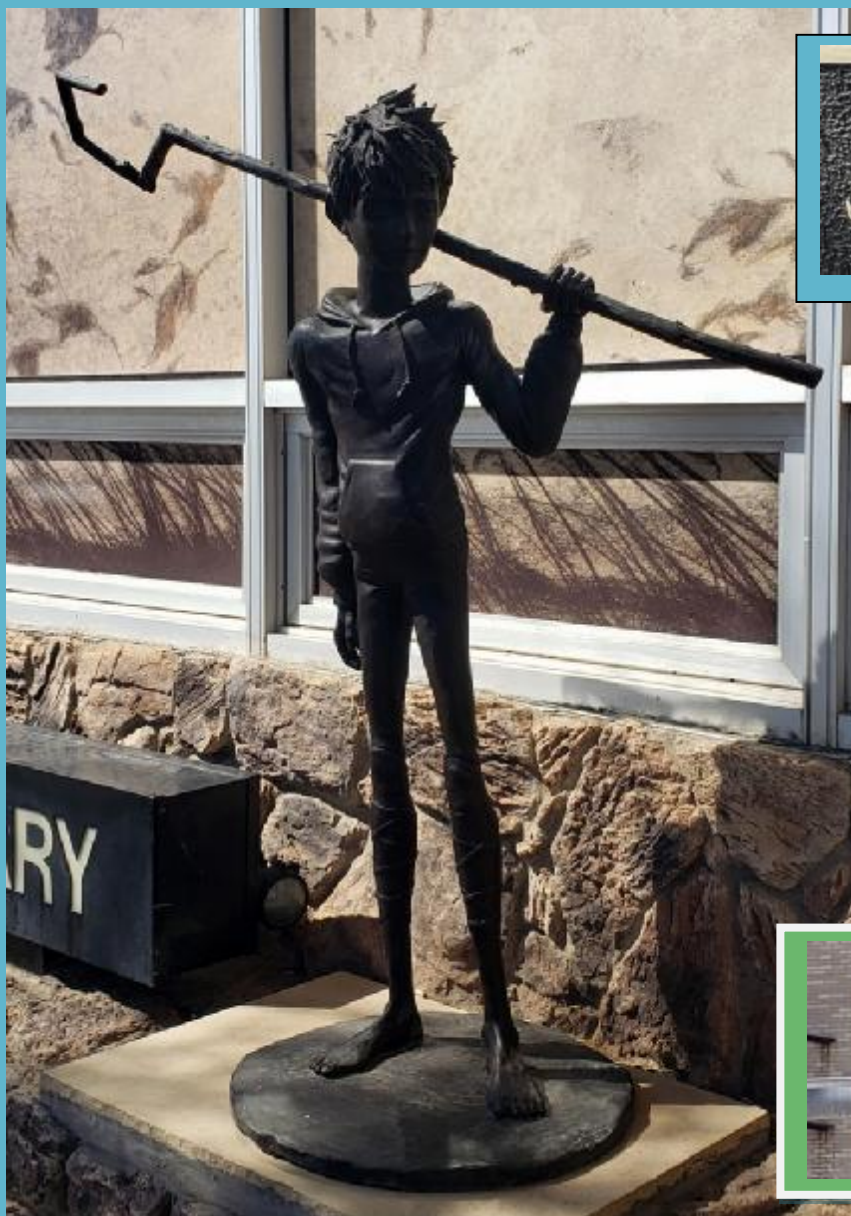


Nicholas St. North
AKA - "Santa Claus"
Guardian of Wonder and Joy
based on the "Guardians of Childhood" book by
William Joyce

"And so the boy and his friend went home
together, talking of wonderful things all the way."

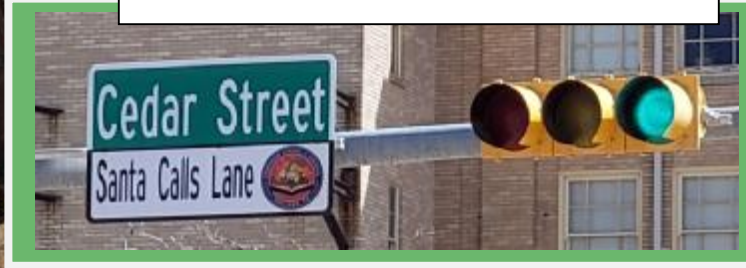
Lost and Found – Oliver Jeffers

Dino Bob. We don't have one of THOSE in our group, but we do have Bob 1, Bob 2, Bob 3 Bob 4, and Bob 5. LOL From the book DINOSAUR BOB AND HIS ADVENTURES WITH THE FAMILY LAZARDO.



Jackson Overland Frost
AKA - "Jack Frost"
Guardian of Fun
based on the "Guardians of Childhood" book by William Joyce

The first six Dr. Seuss sculptures were part of a sculpture garden next to the train depot (I will get to that later). The next bunch were scattered around downtown, before I arrived at another sculpture garden with eight more, most of which I know you will recognize. Downtown Abilene has several granite blocks scattered around the downtown area with storybook quotes carved into them. The sculpture garden below must have had about thirty or so granite benches for sitting on, each again with a storybook quote. I will toss in the ones I liked the best here and there.



THE THREE LITTLE KITTENS
Based on the book "Three Bedtime Stories"
Illustrated by Garth Williams



The three little kittens, they lost
their mittens, and they began to cry,
"Oh mother dear, we sadly fear,
our mittens we have lost!"



THE THREE LITTLE PIGS
Based on the book "Three Bedtime Stories"
Illustrated by Garth Williams

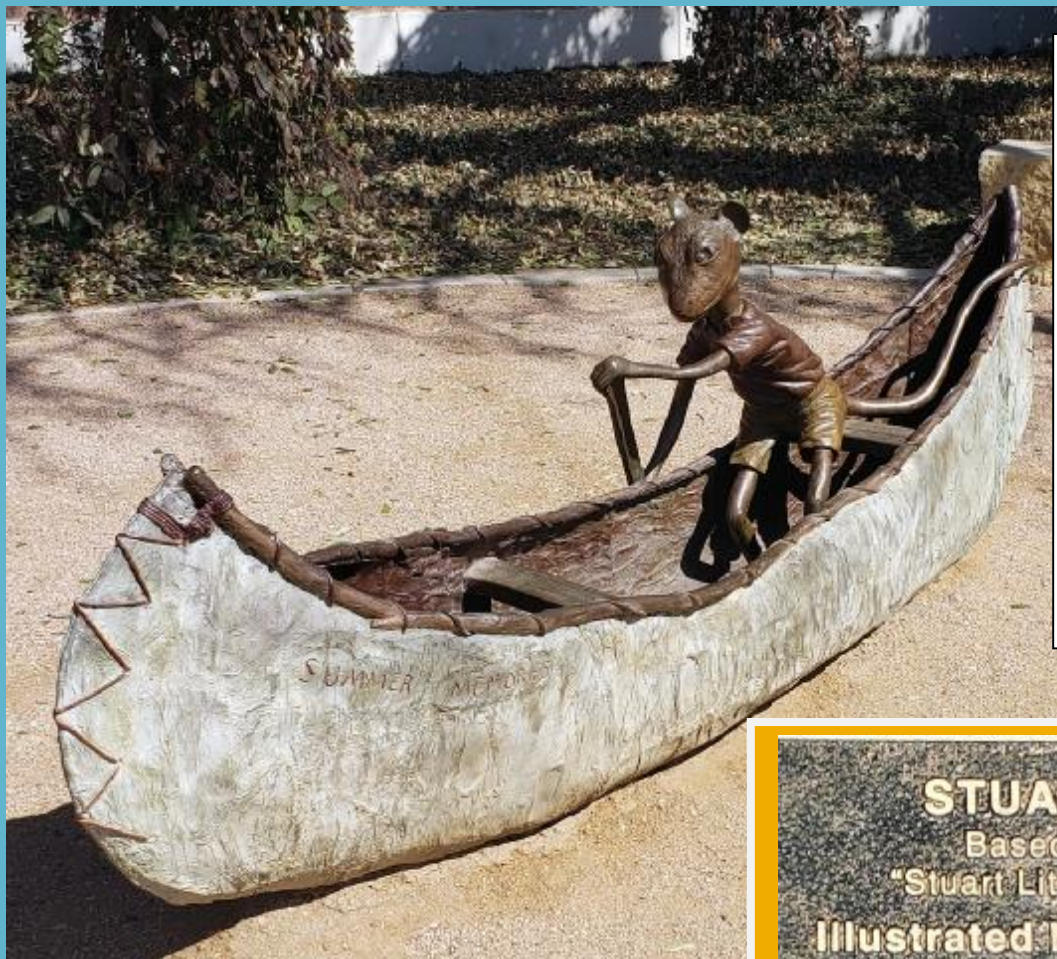


"Good Night Dinosaur"

Based on the book
"How Do Dinosaurs Say Good Night?"
Illustrated by Mark Teague
Text by Jane Yolen



I passed a young mother and her son who had to be less than two years old. She picked him up and put him in the canoe in front of Stuart and told him to look at the camera. I stopped behind her and waved to the little boy who gave out a big smile, perfect for the photo. The mother will think her son is brilliant and never know he was smiling at me.



STUART LITTLE

Based on the book
"Stuart Little" by E.B. White
Illustrated by Garth Williams



CHARLOTTE & WILBUR
Based on the book
"Charlotte's Web" by E.B. White
Illustrated by Garth Williams

"It's been my experience that you can nearly always
enjoy things if you make up your mind
firmly that you will."
Anne of Green Gables – L.M. Montgomery

"The most important thing in life is to
stop saying 'I wish' and
to start saying 'I will.'"
David Copperfield – Charles Dickens

MARCEL AND WILFRED

Based on the book "This Moose Belongs to Me"

By Oliver Jeffers



MR. TIGER

Based on the book "Mr. Tiger Goes Wild"

Written and Illustrated by
Peter Brown



"It is not in doing what you like, but in liking what you do that is the secret of happiness."

- Peter Pan - J.M. Barrie

How true

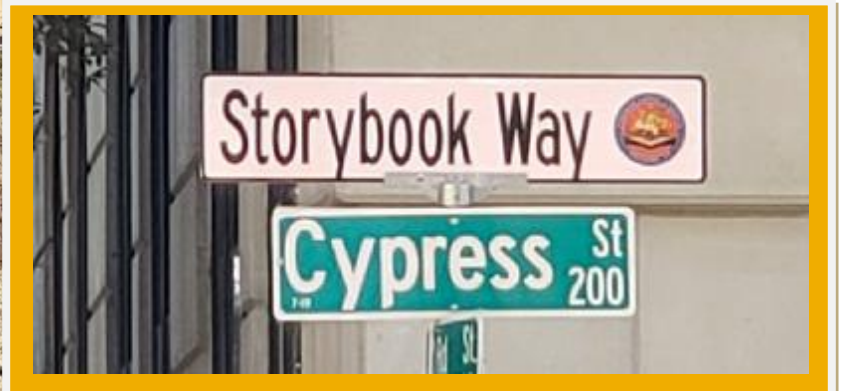
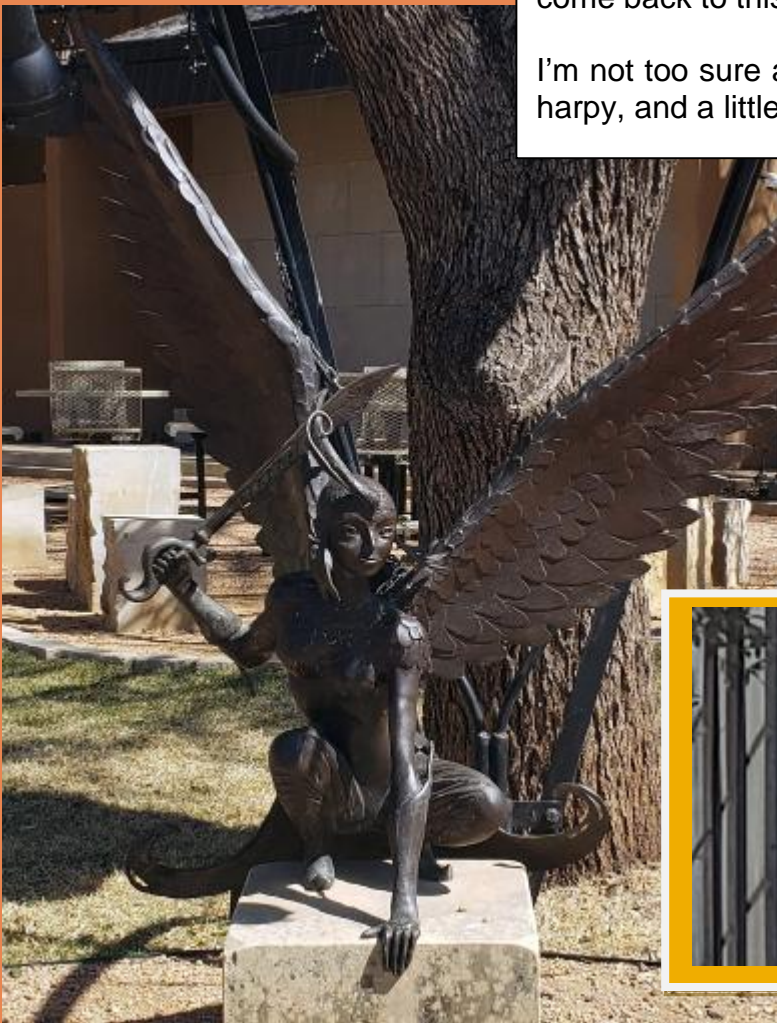
"If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world."

The Hobbit - J.R.R. Tolkien

How true, too.

I left the very entertaining and peaceful garden and headed down Cypress, oops, Storybook Way past the Paramount Theater (I will come back to this) to find the last three sculptures below.

I'm not too sure about this one. To me she looks a little more like a harpy, and a little less like a fairy.



Sanderson Mansnoozie
AKA - "The Sandman"
Guardian of Dreams
based on the "Guardians of Childhood" book by
William Joyce



Seymour – From the CAN YOU SEE WHAT I SEE? Series by Walter Wick



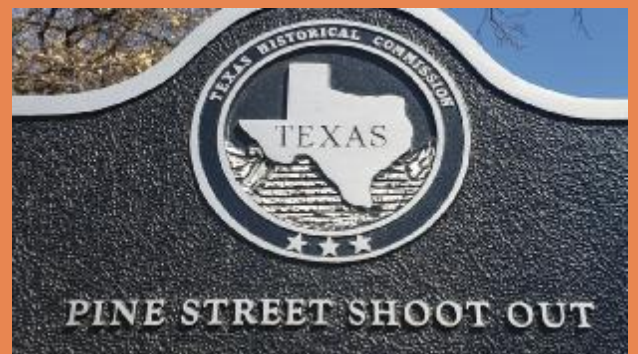
Maybe I should
have just zoomed
in on the pillow?



THE THREE BEARS

- Based on the book "Three Bedtime Stories"
- Illustrated by Garth Williams

Somehow I missed this one earlier and I was not about to go back and redo several pages. You can't even see Papa Bear, Momma Bear and Baby Bear looking out of the doorway, but they're there.



WHEN THE YOUNG RAILROAD TOWN OF ABILENE INCORPORATED IN 1883, THE FIRST CITY OFFICIALS DESIRED TO PROJECT A MORE CIVILIZED IMAGE TO VISITORS AND NEW SETTLERS, AS THE NEW TOWN HAD ALREADY DEVELOPED A LAWLESS REPUTATION SINCE ITS 1881 FOUNDING. STRONG LAWS PROHIBITING SEVERAL FORMS OF DISORDERLINESS WERE ENACTED, ESPECIALLY IN PLACES WHERE ALCOHOL WAS SERVED. ORDINANCES MADE IT ILLEGAL TO FIRE A GUN WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS, AND GAMBLING WAS COMPLETELY OUTLAWED.

ON THE EVENING OF JANUARY 8, 1884, CITY ALDERMAN FRANK COLLINS AND HIS BROTHER, WALTER, WHO WAS A TAYLOR COUNTY DEPUTY SHERIFF, ENTERED A SALOON AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF NORTH FIRST AND PINE STREETS. THE SALOON PROPRIETOR, ZENO L. HEMPHILL, CONFRONTED FRANK COLLINS ABOUT THE NEWLY-PASSED ANTI-GAMBLING LAWS. (HEMPHILL HAD BEEN CONVICTED OF ASSAULT IN 1880 AND WAS SCHEDULED FOR AN APRIL 1884 TRIAL FOR KILLING A MAN THE PREVIOUS YEAR.) ANGRY WORDS, AND THEN PUNCHES, WERE EXCHANGED, AND HEMPHILL DREW A GUN AND SHOT WALTER COLLINS, WHO HAD STEPPED BETWEEN THE TWO MEN. GUNFIRE THEN BROKE OUT BETWEEN FRANK COLLINS AND HEMPHILL. WHEN THE DUST SETTLED, WALTER COLLINS AND ZENO HEMPHILL WERE DEAD, AND FRANK COLLINS DIED FROM HIS INJURIES AFTER TWO MONTHS.

AS A RESULT OF THE INCIDENT, THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE NEW CITY ORDINANCES BECAME A TOP PRIORITY. JOHN J. CLINTON WAS APPOINTED AS CITY MARSHAL, AND HE SERVED IN THE POSITION FOR 37 YEARS. IN ADDITION, THE EPISODE LIKELY INFLUENCED VOTING IN THE JUNE 1887 STATE PROHIBITION ELECTION, IN WHICH ABILENE CITIZENS VOTED "DRY," ALTHOUGH THE STATE VOTED AGAINST PROHIBITION. A CITY PROHIBITION LAW WAS DEFEATED IN 1894, BUT IN 1902, CITIZENS VOTED TO BAN ALCOHOL SALES WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS, AND ABILENE SALOONS REMAINED SHUTTERED FOR 75 YEARS.



Take a break, only twenty-five more non-storybook sculptures to go.....Actually I have a brochure with the other twenty-five and did not see anything that jumped out at me, until I came across this one. Great, I just read the description and it doesn't say what material was used. That's the main reason I liked the piece and took a picture to pass on. It's kind of a bluish gray marble material. It's a copy of a 32 foot tall sculpture commissioned by the Denver International Airport.





Oddly enough, I just watched that movie the other night. The visitor brochure, or it might have been online, stated that self-guided tours of the Paramount are available. So I did just that.

If you can't read the date of the newspaper below, it's May 18th, 1930.

ABILENE MORNING REPORTER-NEWS

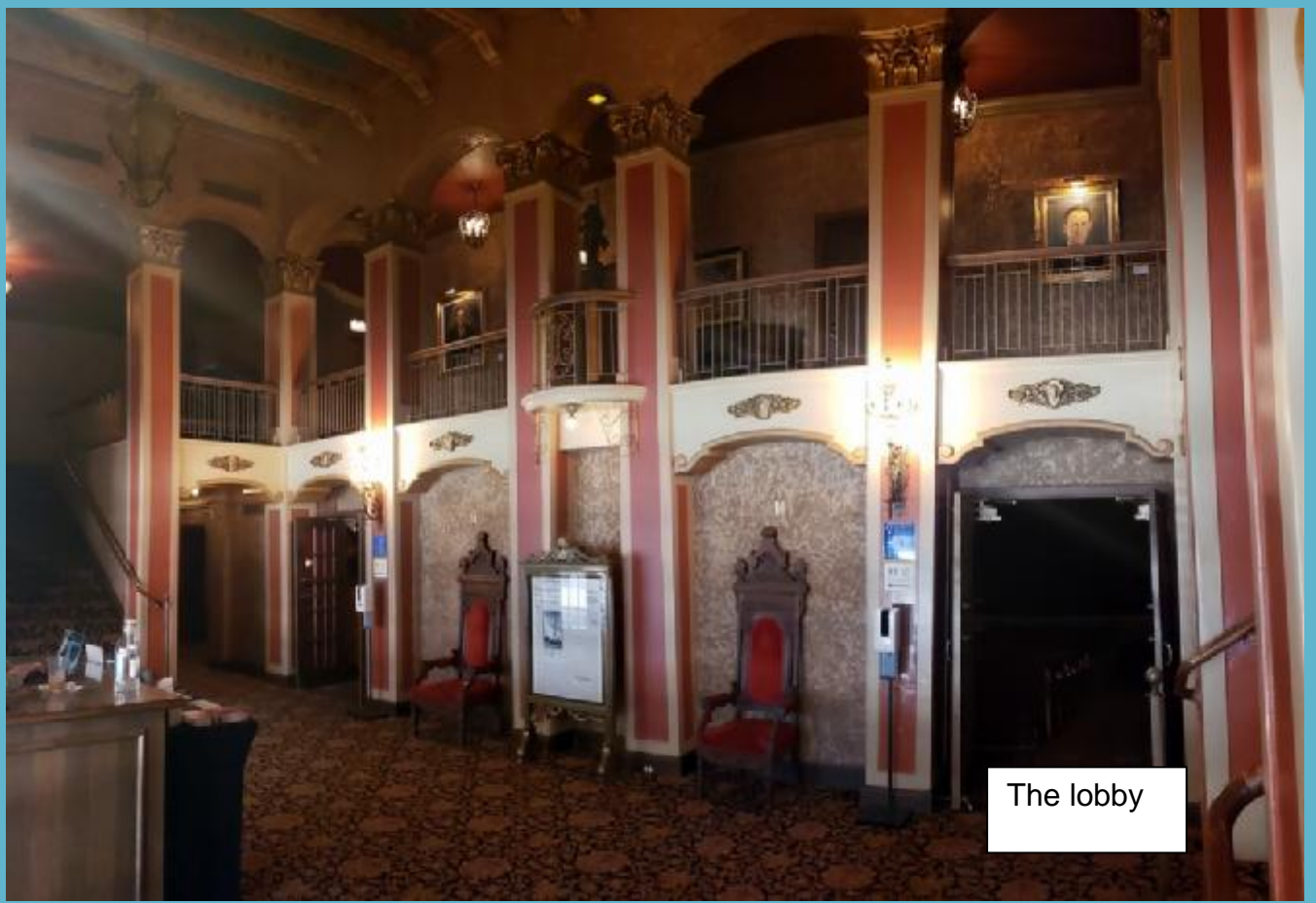
NEW THEATRE, BUILT AT COST OF \$400,000, IS ONE OF MOST BEAUTIFUL IN THE SOUTHWEST

Designed and built in 1930 by architect David Castle, the landmark Paramount Theatre in Abilene, Texas has a rich and significant history. A beautiful example of the nostalgic "atmospheric" movie theatre, it was built in an era when movie-going was meant to be a grand experience that transported you to another time and place. The theatre's main auditorium space was designed to re-create a Spanish / Moorish courtyard at night, complete with projected clouds passing over a neon-lit night sky fitted with twinkling stars.

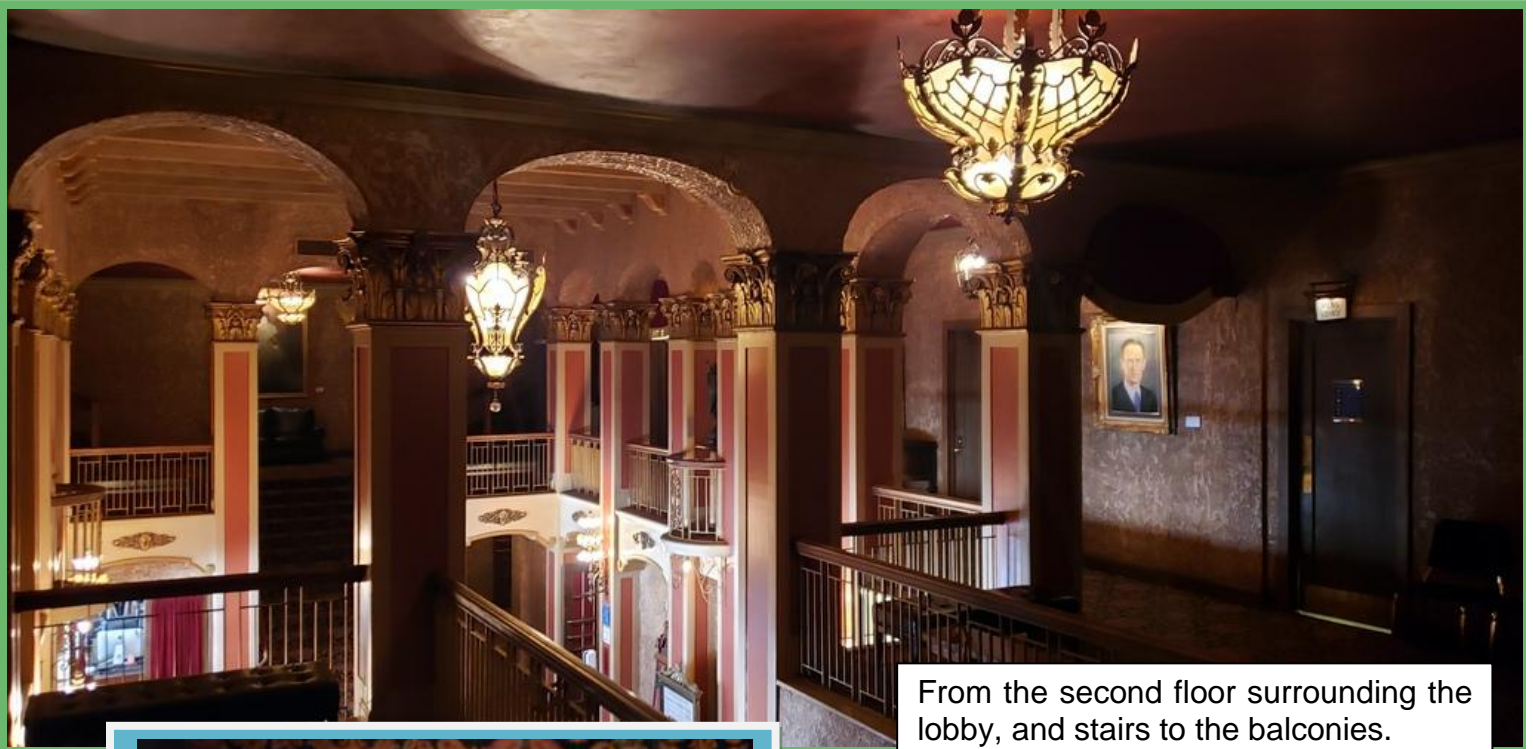
The Paramount, restored in 1987 and renovated to accommodate live theatre, is now the home to a myriad of events, including film, ballet, opera, and concerts. For over 89 years it has stood the test of time as an entertainment showcase of West Texas.

These are the opening paragraphs from the webpage about the Paramount. Quite a history she has. The link below has more info and a lot of pictures from the hey-day of moviedom. Pay special attention to the balconies next to the stage. My pictures do not do it justice.

<https://www.paramountabilene.com/history>



The lobby



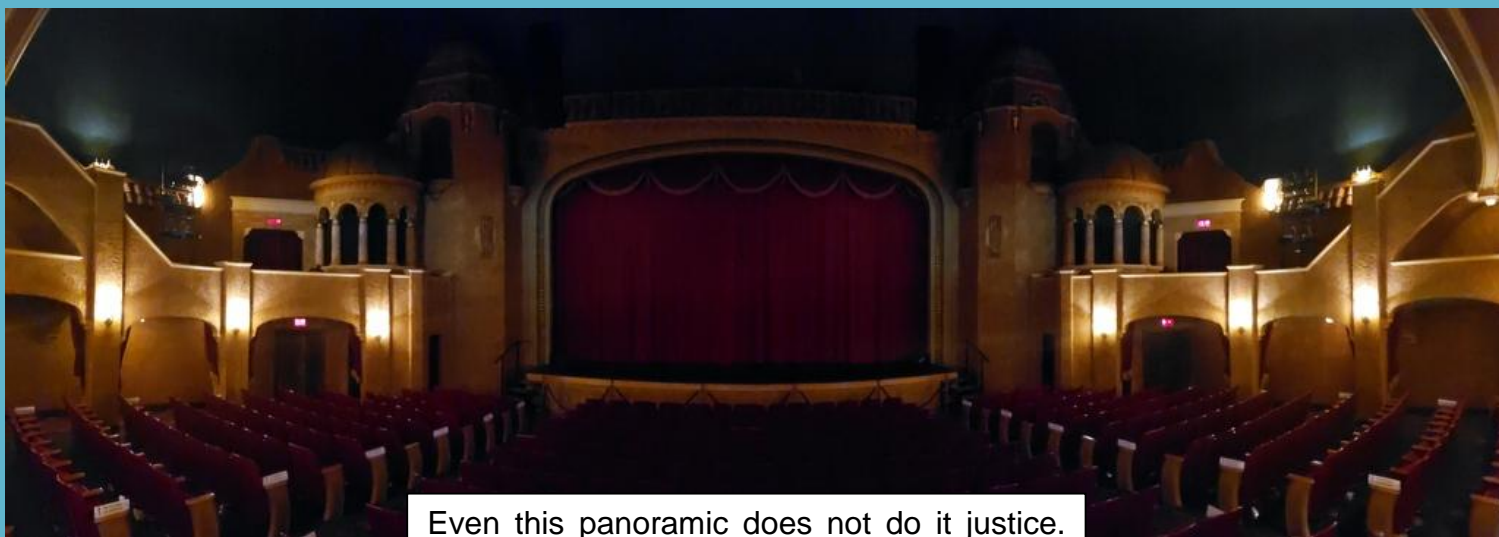
From the second floor surrounding the lobby, and stairs to the balconies.



BALCONY CLOSED

I wanted to get into that balcony so bad I even asked permission, but was denied, then considered a bribe.

Shhhh...I did sneak under the tape but the door was closed also



Even this panoramic does not do it justice. More light is required to see the turret like structures on each corner.



Since I had just left a movie theater I decided to have lunch with Bogie. Let's see how many of the stars you can identify in the artwork below.

HERE'S EATING WITH YOU, KID





The menu opens from the middle like I imagine a program used to. Right is a section of the menu with each dish named for a Bogart movie. I had a *Knock on Any Door*, which is a build your own. Ham, salami, bacon, lettuce, pepper jack and Thousand Island on a wheat berry bread. I still have lunch for tomorrow.

I was at the train depot much earlier, but I didn't want to overwhelm you with historic info plaques.

THE CAINE MUTINY (1954)

For you die-hard fans of Bogie, this cast includes corned beef, Swiss cheese, and sauerkraut served up on rye bread with a feisty appearance by our spicy mustard. 9.25

TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT (1944)

This classic offers great taste and low fat with chicken breast and mozzarella cheese on whole wheat bread with mushrooms, alfalfa sprouts, and tomato. Adding to the taste and not the fat, enjoy a special cameo appearance by fat-free honey Dijon dressing! 7.95

SABRINA (1954)

A romantic interlude between two favorites: succulent chicken breast and delicious ham. Top them off with Swiss cheese, zucchini, tomato, and Parmesan peppercorn dressing. Put it all on a seeded bun and you have a taste delight sure to bring back memories of your first love — FOOD!!!! 7.75

THE BAREFOOT CONTESSA (1954)

Starring roles by fresh sliced mushrooms, avocados, and purple onion topped by melted mozzarella on whole wheat bread. Special appearance by tomatoes, alfalfa sprouts, and Parmesan peppercorn dressing make this a performance not to be missed! 9.55

CHAIN LIGHTNING (1950)

This pleasantly shocking performance features roast beef and shredded cheddar and Monterey Jack cheeses heated on a hoagie roll. Topped off with jalapeños and Parmesan peppercorn dressing, your taste buds will jump for joy! 8.45

SAHARA (1943)



WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE RAILROAD IN ABILENE IN 1881, A RAILROAD CAR WAS USED AS THE FIRST DEPOT. IN 1882, A TWO-STORY STRUCTURE WAS BUILT CONSISTING OF A PASSENGER WAITING ROOM, OFFICE SPACE, DINING AND A HOTEL ON THE SECOND FLOOR. LOCATED A FEW BLOCKS FROM HERE, THE DEPOT WAS REPLACED WITH A ONE-STORY WOOD BUILDING IN 1902. IN RESPONSE TO GROWING PUBLIC EFFORTS, THE TEXAS & PACIFIC RAILROAD ANNOUNCED IN 1907 A PLAN TO ERECT A NEW DEPOT.

ON MARCH 14, 1911, THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE GATHERED TO HEAR FORMER PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT SPEAK. IN 1936, THE WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION BUILT A SECTION OF ELEVATED TRACK WITH CONCRETE UNDERPASSES WITH PASSENGER STAIRS TO TRACK LEVEL. THE DEPOT OPEN FREIGHT BAY WAS ENCLOSED IN 1947 AND THE DORMERS WERE REMOVED FROM THE MAIN ROOF AND TOWER IN 1953. THE PASSENGER TERMINAL CLOSED IN 1984 AND THE DEPOT WAS DONATED TO THE CITY OF ABILENE IN 1991. THE CITY, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DODGE JONES FOUNDATION, COMPLETELY RESTORED THE DEPOT AND IT REOPENED IN 1994.

After lunch I visited a souvenir shop. They had all the storybook sculpture books displayed for purchase.





It's just after 11:00 p.m. (do you know where your children are?) and I have been hearing sirens (not fire trucks or ambulances), at a distance, for the last ten minutes. I think the chase is on.

CHARTERED MARCH 3, 1871, BY ACT OF U.S. CONGRESS, TO BUILD A RAILROAD TO THE PACIFIC COAST, THE TEXAS & PACIFIC RAILWAY COMPANY, UNDER LEADERSHIP OF COLONEL THOMAS A. SCOTT, PRESIDENT, BEGAN CONSTRUCTION ACROSS WEST TEXAS IN 1880. GENERAL GRENVILLE M. DODGE, CIVIL ENGINEER AND BUILDER OF THE UNION PACIFIC, WAS IN CHARGE. THE FIRST TRAIN REACHED THE ABILENE AREA IN EARLY JANUARY 1881 AND A STATION OPENED FOR BUSINESS HERE ON FEBRUARY 28, 1881. THE OFFICE WAS IN A BOXCAR AT THE PRESENT PINE STREET OVERPASS.

AS A POLICY DURING ITS ERA OF CONSTRUCTION, THE TEXAS & PACIFIC PROMOTED THE SETTLEMENT OF WEST TEXAS. ENCOURAGED BY LOCAL RANCHERS, AGENTS OF THE RAILWAY HELD ON MARCH 15, 1881, THE FIRST AUCTION OF LOTS IN ABILENE TOWNSITE. ON THAT DAY 178 LOTS WERE SOLD FOR \$27,550.00. THE WISDOM OF THE PURCHASERS HAS SINCE BEEN WELL CONFIRMED, FOR ABILENE IS NOW THE BUSINESS, AGRICULTURAL, TRANSPORTATION, MEDICAL, EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL CENTER FOR CENTRAL WEST TEXAS.

As I was inputting the address for my next stop, a mini-van parked in front of me and a guy, probably in his 40's or early 50's (I'm terrible at judging ages) took his bike off the rack and walked over to talk to me. He is from Washington state and traveling around the country, staying in hotels mostly, sometimes in his van, and eating out all the time. He asked me about the RV, parking it, driving it, gas mileage, etc, etc. I answered his questions and told him about the AllStays App. Since he had just arrived here in Abilene I told him how much I enjoyed it and what there is to see. Funny story at the end.

**Dyess Memorial Center
A Heritage Museum for
Dyess A.F.B.**

I didn't expect much from this museum, and I wasn't disappointed. It is only one room, so I just did a quick look around and took the photos below. My interest was more for the memorial outside.

World War II

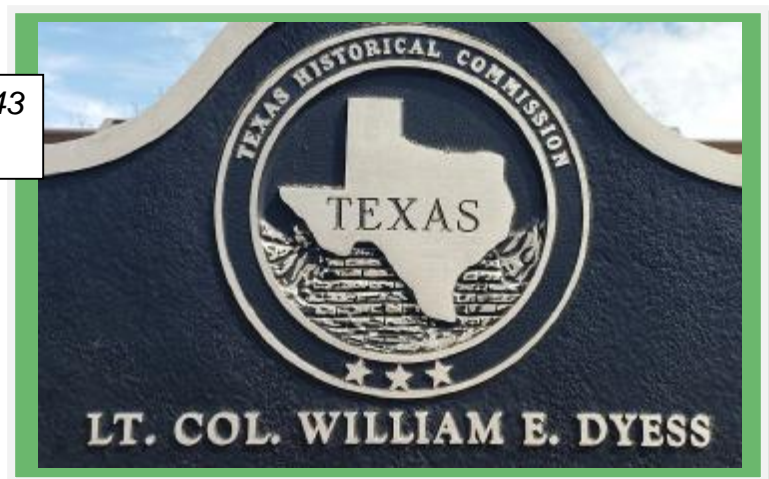
When the Army Came to Town

Abilene mounted a strong campaign in Washington, approaching senators, congressmen, and military officials. Washington came back with an offer: Abilene could have a base if they secured 2,229 acres of land in a week. The town needed \$125,000 to buy the acreage; they raised \$144,801.51. Abilene wanted the military, and the Army was on its way.

Construction on the post began December 1940 and was named after Medal of Honor recipient and native Texan, David Barkley. Camp Barkeley, as it was christened after a clerical error, hosted 60,000 soldiers, more than double the number of Abilenians. Made entirely of wood frames and tents, it acted as an infantry basic training camp and hosted German prisoners of war.

Just an FYI – There were 27 prisoner of war camps in Texas.

There is a documentary titled 4-4-43 which is about the Lt. Col.



ALBANY, TEXAS NATIVE WILLIAM EDWIN DYESS (b. 1916) GRADUATED FROM JOHN TARLETON AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE AND BECAME AN AVIATION CADET AT RANDOLPH FIELD, SAN ANTONIO. DYESS WENT TO THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS AS COMMANDER OF THE 21ST PURSUIT SQUADRON OF P-40 AIRCRAFT.

AFTER THE JAPANESE ATTACKED PEARL HARBOR, DECEMBER 7, 1941, AND INVADED THE PHILIPPINES, DYESS LED SUCCESSFUL ATTACKS AGAINST JAPANESE SHIPPING IN SUBIC BAY, WITH FEW OPERATIONAL PLANES, AND SERVED AS AN INFANTRY COMMANDER DURING THE FALL OF BATAAN ON APRIL 9, 1942. HE WAS TAKEN PRISONER AND FACED THE GRUELING BATAAN DEATH MARCH THAT RESULTED IN THE LOSS OF THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN AND FILIPINO LIVES. DESPITE THE MALNUTRITION, DISEASE AND TORTURE THE CAPTIVES FACED IN JAPANESE PRISON CAMPS, DYESS SURVIVED. ON APRIL 4, 1943,

ALMOST A YEAR AFTER HIS CAPTURE, HE AND 11 OTHER MEN ESCAPED, MAKING THEIR WAY THROUGH HOSTILE TERRITORY. THEY CONNECTED WITH A GUERRILLA GROUP WHO PUT THEM IN TOUCH WITH A U.S. SUBMARINE THAT TOOK THEM TO AUSTRALIA. DYESS DEBRIEFED WITH THE WAR DEPARTMENT AND GEN. DOUGLAS MacARTHUR. AFTER DYESS RETURNED HOME, PUBLICATION OF HIS STORIES IN THE *CHICAGO TRIBUNE* PROVIDED INVALUABLE INFORMATION ON CONDITIONS IN JAPANESE PRISONER OF WAR CAMPS THAT ALTERED WORLD OPINION.

PROMOTED TO LT. COLONEL AND RECUPERATED FROM HIS WARTIME ORDEAL, DYESS RETURNED TO FLYING. HE DIED ON DECEMBER 22, 1943, WHEN THE NEW P-38 HE PILOTED CAUGHT FIRE OVER BURBANK, CA., AND CRASHED. HIS WIFE, MARAJEN, PUBLISHED HIS PERSONAL WAR ACCOUNTS THE NEXT YEAR AS *THE DYESS STORY*, AND HE WAS THE INSPIRATION FOR THE ACCLAIMED PLAY *MEN OF BATAAN* (1943). HIGHLY DECORATED FOR COMBAT HEROISM AND LEADERSHIP, DYESS WAS BURIED IN ALBANY (35 MI. NE). IN HIS HONOR, ABILENE AIR FORCE BASE WAS RENAMED DYESS AIR FORCE BASE IN 1956.

(2004)





I thought the Sam's building where I parked would somewhat block the high winds, but I was wrong. The RV was rocking and the slide-out awning was flapping. Sometime around 2 a.m. I moved the RV closer to the building, but it only helped a little. The roaring of the wind, along with worry about the awning, made it hard to sleep. In the morning while eating breakfast I started the RV and drew in the slide, just to save any more motion to the awning. The awning is ok by the way.

I really enjoyed my time in Abilene. There are a few more things to see here, but none that are super interesting. The second sculpture garden, with the quotes on the benches, was one of those places that is extremely peaceful and pleasant to be in. I am wondering if it's because the setting took me back to an earlier age of innocence and brought back good childhood memories. I suppose it would be a little different if there was a convention in progress inside the convention center whose grounds house the garden. The weather was perfect again. Lunch was good and in a great setting. I was actually looking for an Abilene beer glass to buy in the souvenir shop, that's how much I enjoyed it. I rarely buy souvenirs, I have my photos.

Funny story from the guy in the mini-van – He has tire chains in his van because he lives in Washington, but he never used them. Then here he was in Texas during the cold snap and he put the tire chains on because of the icy roads.

My plan was to take the back roads from Abilene to San Angelo, but I found the Abilene Dam Rd did not allow vehicles; then I came to a fork which Google showed me was a through street but both forks were dead ends; the one I followed ended at the driveway for the monstrosity above. Since I was getting low on fuel I decided to skip the back roads, which had been a lot of fun. There are large hills in this area and the road made several cuts through the iron enriched soil (orange/rusty) and rock outcroppings.

Is there some reason why gas prices have skyrocketed? Covid mandates being withdrawn so stations expect people to drive a lot more and buy more gas? Diesel is up to \$3.09 at several spots. I did find it for \$2.49. That was one good thing about Covid, lower gas prices and fewer vehicles on the road.

I made it to a Walmart in San Angelo for tonight, and since it's midnight and I did not get much sleep last night, I better hit the hay.

Until next time.....