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### **John Watson: Museum marks longhorn contribution**

LS Ranches Texas Longhorn Museum Texas and longhorn cattle go together.

Longhorn cattle helped to make Texas the great state it is today. To honor the Texas longhorn, Larry Smith of Glen Rose has opened the LS Ranches Texas Longhorn Museum & Gifts on the square in downtown Glen Rose.

Larry grew up in the ranching business. His dad, Sid F. Smith, had a Polled Hereford Ranch at Groesbeck, east of Waco.

After he grew up, Larry managed several registered cattle and Texas longhorn ranches before acquiring his own place, LS Ranches at Crowley. His specialty here was the Texas longhorn.

Larry told me he stopped being a cowhand when he realized that cowhands had no retirement benefits.

One of the more notable longhorn cattle from LS Ranches was "Magnum," which was named national grand champion in 1994 and became an icon at Fossil Rim Wildlife Center, where he lived to the ripe old age of 27.

"Texas USA," the Sesquicentennial bull, was born with a natural map of Texas on his forehead. "Texas USA" stirred the hearts and imagination of all Texans during the 1986 celebration.

President Reagan's "Duke" was born at Happy Shahan's Alamo Village near Brackettville. "Duke" was a favorite at LS Ranches before acquiring his new home at Rancho del Cielo in California.

On Aug. 15 Larry opened the Texas Longhorn Museum in the old Palace Theatre building at 114 NE Barnard St., across from the courthouse in Glen Rose.

When you enter the museum, the first thing that catches your eye is a portable stairway in the center of the room containing twelve steps and a pair of mounted longhorns on each step. The largest pair of longhorns is on the top step.

There are more sets of longhorns hanging on the walls along with pictures of some of the more notable longhorn cattle from the LS Ranches.

While here you may wish to purchase a pair of the mounted Longhorns to go over the fireplace mantle in your den. The prices range from \$18 to \$1,100, depending on the size. Don't particularly care for mounted longhorns? How about a large print of one of the longhorn cattle to hang on the wall..

There are also many newspaper clippings in frames along the walls. Some of these clippings tell about the LS Ranches and others are about longhorn cattle.

One of the clippings about the sale of the ranch is headlined; "LS Ranches to sell Bun

Warmer, No Bull.”

The article continues: “Larry Smith’s LS Ranches in Crowley, plus approximately 2,700 acres in Tarrant, Johnson, Somervell and Limestone Counties, Can be bought by the first \$4,200,750 in sight. That figure isn’t firm, says sales manager Diane Moorehead, but it isn’t mushy either. The final dispersal of Smith’s famous longhorn cattle (bulls too) and equipment will be made at an Oct. 2 auction in Crowley. Everything goes, from the portable rodeo arena to Smith’s barbells. With cold weather coming, the bun warmer is a good buy, too.”

The newspaper announcement was in 1982, but the huge sale did not take place until Feb. 28, 1983. That’s when the longhorn cattle went up for auction along with the stuff from the ranch.

A front page clipping from the Waco Tribune-Herald, dated March 24, 2002, announces: “Goesbeck cowboy designs custom saddle for president.”

The caption next to the picture of the saddle and designer states, “Benton Moore was on a hunting trip in the Artic Circle on Sept. 11. When he got back, a South Dakota group asked him to create for President Bush this saddle, which is on display at the Limestone County Courthouse in Groesbeck.”

Another newspaper clipping shows the son of a cowboy, Will Rogers Jr., posing next to the risky end of Texas longhorn “Red River,” owned by Neiman Marcus.

In 1986, Gene Glasscock completed a two year horseback ride from the Arctic Circle to the equator. The Ecuadorian saddle used by Glasscock on this historic ride is on display at the museum.

If you are interested in learning more about Texas longhorn cattle or just interested in the cowboy way, this will be a good place to spend a few hours perusing the displays and news clippings.

The museum hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays, 10 a.m. to noon Saturdays 1-3 p.m. Sundays.

The book “History and Lore of Cleburne and Johnson County, Texas” by John Watson is available at the Times-Review office.

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