

**Oral History Interview of
Patricia Glover**

**Interviewed by: Monte Monroe
April 16, 2011
Anson, Texas**

**Part of the:
*Texas Cowboys' Christmas Ball***

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Interview Series Background:

This collection features interviews related to the Texas Cowboys' Christmas Ball in Anson, Texas. Topics covered include the traditions associated with the ball, the leadership within the Cowboys' Christmas Ball Association, music and Michael Martin Murphey, and the way in which the ball has changed over the years.

Transcript Overview:

This interview features Patricia Glover of Abilene, Texas. Patricia discusses the Cowboy Christmas Ball in Anson and her involvement with the event. Glover talks about the importance of the event and its appeal, music, and the legacy of the ball.

Length of Interview: 00:19:19

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Background	5	00:00:00
School	6	00:03:33
Community involvement	7	00:05:27
Involvement in the ball and other events during the week of the ball	7	00:06:16
Appeal of the ball	10	00:13:03
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Monte Monroe (MM):

My name is Monte Monroe from Texas Tech University Southwest Collection. It is April 16, 2011, and I'm in Anson, Texas, at the events center of the Cowboy Christmas Ball. I'm here today with Anne Jefferies of Abilene, Texas. Anne, would you please give me your full name, any nickname if you have one, and your date and place of birth.

Anne Jefferies (AJ):

Okay, Patricia Anne Jefferies Glover. My date of birth is 8-14 of '43, and I go by Anne.

MM:

Very good, Anne. All right and your parents' names, your father first.

AJ:

Archie Aaron Jefferies and Louise Lee Jefferies.

MM:

Okay. And do you know where they were born?

AJ:

My dad was born in Centerline in Jones County, and my mother was born in Sulphur Springs, Texas.

MM:

Okay, now my neck of the woods. Your grandparents' names on your father's side?

AJ:

Bob Jefferies and Lena May Jefferies.

MM:

Okay, where were they from?

AJ:

Bob was born in Abilene, and then his wife, Lena May, was born in Virginia.

MM:

Okay very good, your mother's grandparents?

AJ:

Let's see, Mr. Lee, I all of a sudden forgot his name, isn't that weird? They were born around Anson, Texas. They were sharecroppers, so they moved a lot.

MM:

Okay, very good. Anne, tell us a little bit about—tell me where you went to school, elementary and high school, and then tell us a little bit about what your home life was like, what activities you engaged in. Were you a tomboy or a girly girl? Did you like to cook, did you like to ride horses, did you like to ride a bicycle, you know what your neighborhood was like, what it was like growing up, and what interested you and what schools you went to.

AJ:

Okay. Well, I was raised in Abilene, Texas. I went to North Park Elementary, and then we moved and went to Anson Jones Elementary, then Lincoln Junior High in Abilene, Texas, and then I transferred to Hawley, Texas. That's how I got involved. Suanne Holtman, who is one of the associates, we graduated together.

MM:

And what year was that?

AJ:

1962. My childhood was great. We did a lot of outdoor activities. I know my sister, who is five years older than me, Betty, we would do performances in old abandoned barracks that they had bought from Camp Barkley. Mother would hang up the sheets and we'd make Kool-Aid and cookies and invite the whole neighborhood and perform. Of course, my dad being a musician, we always had the piano going and the guitar going. My dad used to say he made a lot of extra nickels because he would bet on me running because we would have neighborhood races, and just was a great childhood, family reunions and wonderful friends.

MM:

Very good. Now did you have any particular teachers or school activities that you feel like influenced you in your early years?

AJ:

I think Mrs. Forrester, she was our home economics teacher. Of course, we took about cooking and everything, and that's really when I became interested in cooking. It was real interesting though because in my earlier, say, nine or ten years old, I was begging my mother if I could cook and she said, "No, I'm not going to let you." And so later on in life then I asked her why and she said, "Well, she was raised during the Depression. If you cook something and it burned, you didn't have a pantry to go to and get anything out." So that made me very aware of how to stretch a budget and do that sort of thing.

MM:

Absolutely. Now did you continue your education in college?

AJ:

No, I did not. I married in '63 and I became a floral designer. I went into floral school.

MM:

Okay, very good, and are you still married?

AJ:

No, I am not. I divorced twenty years ago and had two children, Todd and Robyn. My son is a musician and my daughter is in dental care.

MM:

Okay, and do you have any grandchildren?

AJ:

I have two, my granddaughter is eighteen and she lives in San Marcos and goes to college in Austin. My grandson lives in Seguin and he's a welder.

MM:

Okay very good, very good. And their names?

AJ:

Sydney and Robert.

MM:

Okay now are you involved there in Abilene in any local service groups or do you have any extracurricular activities, either in church or in the community that you'd like to share with us?

AJ:

Well, I do volunteer for Abilene Baptist Association Ministry. We give out food and clothing, and we just finished our Angel Foods, which was you would buy a box of food for thirty dollars and so that was a big help to a lot of people. I enjoy going to plays and volunteering for that.

MM:

Okay, very good, very good. Now let's turn our attention to the Cowboy Christmas Ball. You mentioned to me before we started the interview that your dad had played here, and of course, you have had a long time life relationship with Suanne, who's the secretary of the board here. So tell us a little bit about how you became involved in the Cowboy Christmas Ball and your father's participation in it and then we will start talking more specifically about that.

AJ:

Well, about probably about ten years ago, Suanne and I started—I was living in San Antonio and I'd come home for a visit during the summer and she said, "Why don't you come to the ball?" So I made an effort to be here for that. By that time my dad was in his eighties and he just didn't feel like—he had bad hearing, so he just didn't feel like participating. So that's what got me started. Then I think two years later I brought my son, and that was fun because I'd never danced with him before. So that began another journey. Then I moved here in 2003 and have been coming here every year.

MM:

Okay you say you moved here. Do you mean here in Anson or in Abilene?

AJ:

I'm sorry, I moved to Abilene, yes, I moved to Abilene.

MM:

And why did you move to Abilene?

AJ:

Well, my mother had already passed and my brother had cancer and I came back to help with him and my dad was elderly and so I knew it was time to come back.

MM:

Now you said that your father used to play here. Tell us a little bit about what you know about him playing here at the Cowboy Christmas Ball. What instrument did he play?

AJ:

Well, he was the band leader. He had his own band.

MM:

And what was his name?

AJ:

Archie Jefferies and his band was the Fraley Sputane Boys.

MM:

Okay and do you remember any of those members of that band?

AJ:

I do, I have—let's see, he told me that they had been playing a lot around the community, and he had a daily radio program for KRBC which was in the Hilton at the time, it's now the Windsor in Abilene. Of course, KRBC was a radio station. He said that he talked to the manager, he called him the manager at that time, in let's see was it '56? No, in '46, and I was three years old and he said he talked to the manager and asked him if they'd be interested in playing and they said yes and then he played for six years.

MM:

Did he favor any particular instrument?

AJ:

Well, he played mainly the guitar and he was the lead singer. He had Popcorn Deatherage who was the fiddle player, Toby Gibbs who was the bass player, Mustler was his last name, I don't remember his first name, but he played the keyboard. Gerald Strickland played the bass, and they did a lot of dances. He had nicknames for all of them which they've documented in the photos. Anyway, they had a lot of fun, but he, my dad, and Popcorn were the two most sought, you know, "Would you sing this song?" "Popcorn, would you play this song?"

MM:

And do you recall—did your father ever tell you how he got, aside from this being a regular gig, how he became involved with the Cowboy Christmas Ball and what he thought of the Cowboy Christmas Ball?

AJ:

Well, he had talked to the manager, and he really thought it was just an awesome thing and he was really honored with it. To be asked back so many times, he was just really thrilled. I remember one story, he told me that when they started they had chicken wire on one side and that's where the spectators would sit, and they pay twenty-five cents, and then the dancers played fifty. And he said, Of course it was no drinking, but he said, "You know every now and then, somebody would run out to their car and come back in," he said, so you always knew something was going on. He just said the crowd was wonderful and of course, the older members now, the Beasleys and the Fawkes, he knew them all when they were young.

MM:

Now, there are different events that occur on this weekend around the Cowboy Christmas Ball here in Anson. You know, you have the Larry Chittenden Event where there is cowboy poetry and then you have this event here. Can you make a distinction for me, between these two types of events or how they relate to each other?

AJ:

That, I just knew by the history. I never participated in the Larry Chittenden situation. Dad never talked about that, so I really don't know too much about that other than the ball itself.

MM:

What do you see as the most characteristic aspect of the Cowboy Christmas Ball?

AJ:

Family, and I think of course the tradition, learning about the old days and the respect of families and how you grew up together dancing and it's all good clean fun. Of course, the costumes are just amazing.

MM:

And tell me what appeals to you about the ball and the whole event itself, the most to you personally. You mentioned your passion for cooking. I know that you were involved with cooking the wonderful meals, particularly on Thursday night. You mentioned the costumes. Tell me a little bit about that if that appeals you.

AJ:

Well, it appeals to me from afar. I'm not into making the costumes myself, but it's such an art, such research. Then when the event happens on Thursday night to see all the different types that people have come up with, it's just beautiful, beautiful and then the boxes that they sell and just the good music. Just really good dance music.

MM:

How do you see the Cowboy Christmas Ball in terms of how it influences people that participate, like yourself, younger generations, older generations? What quality of this event do you think appeals to all these different people?

AJ:

I think first the historical part of it that they've gone back and kept the tradition the same and that it is so family oriented that you're just at home and you feel relaxed and you feel like every time you meet somebody, you feel like you've known them before. Of course, there's so many people that come from so many different places that that's real interesting.

MM:

And that leads me to another question. People come from all over the country, and indeed, from abroad to this event. Do you think that they find an appeal in these very qualities of family and Western Texas traditions that you've explained here? Or do you think something else draws

them here? Maybe something that they don't have in their normal day to day life. Perhaps you've talked to some of them about that. Would you like to share those thoughts?

AJ:

Well, I do feel like it's, again, something so different and so appealing that they've never seen before, and when they come, they literally are just grab onto it and hold onto it for a long time. My sister lives in Australia and her name is Betty. She said they're beginning to have a few things like this, but several years ago she was here visiting and Suanne and Bernie did a presentation at the Grace Museum about the Christmas Ball and did a reenactment of them like being couples for the first time coming. And she was just blown away. She said, "I wished I'd could get back here for Christmas and come." I do think people are yearning to get back to the old ways. It's such a high stress bustle life that this is just a relaxed time once they get here.

MM:

Moving forward into the future, what do you see as—what would be your personal aspirations for this event into the future?

AJ:

Into the future? Well, I hope the association can continue to bring in new people because that's what's going to, younger people, I think to make it go forward. I hope it continues because there's just too many wonderful things that in our past that we don't know about that we do need to share with the others.

MM:

And how do you think that the board and the long term participants, how do you think that they can assure that this event will continue into the future? If you were God and you could change any one thing or you could make one thing happen to assure the future continuity of this event, what would that be?

AJ:

Well, their longevity and then passing it on again to their family getting involved and recruiting younger people. It's such a wonderful event.

MM:

And in terms of the music, what is it that appeals to you about the music and the dancing itself? Do you like the Polka or the Schottische or the two-step, or do you just like it all?

AJ:

Well, I pretty much like it all. I love the western swing, you know, the dancing part. I grew up dancing, so it's just such a good feeling to get dressed up and knowing you're going to go do the two-step and meet new people. It's just something that you either like or you don't like.

MM:

Now Michael Martin Murphey and his band, The Rio Grande, come here on an annual basis. Do you think they contribute anything and tell me about your experiences with that?

AJ:

Well, I'd listen to him through the years, and so I was really shocked that he actually came to a small town to do this. I think it contributes a lot. I think it's contributed to his career, too, because now he's doing other Christmas Balls and of course, his song, "Just Put Anson on the Map," it's just amazing how many people—they usually sell out before the event ever gets close. He contributes a lot, and the band is very—they're very good.

MM:

Now because we have limited time here I'll wrap up with one final statement. You can kind of throw in anything that I didn't ask here, Anne. Is there anything else that you'd like to share about your experiences with Cowboy Christmas Ball, anything that you'd like to see, add to it in the future, or is there anything in your life that we didn't talk about that you'd like to share?

AJ:

I think in the future, I mean, I know I'm at that age that change is good if you can accept it. But there's situations like I feel like the Cowboy Christmas Ball, that it nearly needs to stay the same because it wouldn't be the ball if it didn't stay the same. I just love coming and meeting people, and thanks to my dad, because when he was young, he sent off for a mail order guitar and shared music all of my life, and so I think that's what led me here. Otherwise, I don't think I would have been interested. I probably would have still been an Elvis rock and roller, but I love country music best.

MM:

That's very good, very good. Okay, Anne, thank you so much for visiting with us today and we look forward to seeing you at the Cowboy Christmas Ball next year.

AJ:

Thank you, I'll be there. Thank you.

End of Recording