

Press release: Texas Music Seminar

By: Bob Gray

## **The Best Buck You'll Never Spend - FREE Texas Music Seminar!**

Each year Kerrville's **Texas Heritage Music Foundation**, as part of the annual three-day community education event called **Texas Heritage Living History Weekend** (Sept. 24-26), hosts a Saturday morning Texas Heritage Music Seminar that brings together a few of the best minds in Texas music to share their knowledge and experiences with the public. This year's seminar will be featuring an author, a scholar, a performer, and a historian on Saturday, September 25, from 10 am to Noon, on the Schreiner University campus in the Cailloux Center.

The panelists will be:

**Roger Wood.** Mr. Wood authored *Down In Houston: Bayou City Blues*, and contributed to *The Roots of Texas Music*, *The Jazz and Blues Lover's Guide to the U.S.*, and other musical histories. His focus will be on the post-World War II Blues story, and explaining why Houston adds a unique contribution to the larger fabric of Texas blues. Among the subtopics: Lightnin' Hopkins and country-style blues in the big city; the Duke-Peacock Record empire – once the largest African-American owned record company in the world, and profoundly influential on popular culture; and the relationship between Zydeco and Blues on the upper Gulf Coast.

**Steve Davis.** Mr. Davis is a true Texas music scholar. Among the topics he will be discussing: Janis Joplin's contributions to Texas Blues, and as a representation of the Texas musicians who fled to California during the 1960's counterculture movement. Mr. Davis is also working on a book on Texas Zydeco.

Performing and proffering a little history on Texas blues singers, writers, and performers, with a few examples of it on her guitar, will be **Karen Abrahams**. The mandolin will probably come into it, and Karen's singing is a real treat. Her most recent CD, *For The Love Of The Song* is proof enough. (Listen on her website: [www.karenabrahams.com](http://www.karenabrahams.com))

The panel moderator will be **Deirdre Lannon**, project administrator for the Center for Texas Music History at Texas State University in San Marcos. A professional musician for the past 20 years, "Dee" will open the seminar with a song. She is currently working on her MA at Texas State University with a focus on Texas music history. She will provide warp and woof to the tapestry the panelists have loomed.

As you have probably noticed in the above descriptions, there is a lot of overlap in their accomplishments. The moderator is an accomplished musician and historian; the performer, Karen Abrahams, is something of an historian herself; Steve Davis and Roger Wood are also historians, authors, and scholars.

This is important if you are a Texas Blues fan with an interest in influences, connections, and continuity. It may be hard to imagine it now, but soon there will be no one alive with first person experience of the original Texas Blues genre and its pioneering artists. The youngest are in their 60's and 70's. The guest panelists are among the very few to have made connections with the people who made those first moves. If you've ever had questions, this is the place to get reliable answers. Curiosities satisfied, and no cats will die.

The event will be held at the **Cailloux Center Theatre** on **Schreiner University** campus on **Saturday, 25 September**, from **10 am to Noon**. Of course, the seminar is free to all, and educators and music aficionados are especially encouraged to attend. Fill your intellectual quiver, meet fellow enthusiasts, and enjoy the best buck you'll never spend.