American Windmills: An Album of Historic Photography. By T. Lindsay Baker. 2007. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK. 156 p. US\$34.95 hardcover. ISBN-13: 978-0-8061-3802-2.

American Windmills is truly an album of historic photographs. Author T. Lindsay Baker purchased his first old photograph of a windmill in a junk shop, paying no more than a dollar. In 1974 he took a black-and-white photography class and bought his first single-lens reflex camera. From then on his search for historic windmill pictures became unstoppable. He soon discovered that scores of public repositories and private collections contained photographs of windmills, and he secured reproductions of the best images. In preparation for this book the author along with his editor looked at approximately 2,000 photographs to select the ones used.

Acknowledgment is given to the late B. H. "Tex" Burdick, Sr., of El Paso, Texas, who from the 1920s through the 1940s photographed his employees doing the many jobs involved in windmill erection and maintenance. Burdick allowed the author to copy his collection onto safety film. Other picture sources were the archives of the firms that made the windmills. Many other archivists and librarians also provided pictures. An expert historian on windmills for 25 years, the author brings to the reader an informative text along with this album of windmill pictures.

Windmills were introduced to this country in the 1620s when English immigrants erected them first in Virginia. These Old World windmills generally had "four blades covered with canvas sails and had to be directed by hand to face the wind." This type of windmill worked well for grinding grain, but they were large and expensive. Farmers and livestock raisers needed small wind machines for pumping water and limited grinding of grain.

In 1854 the first design for a self-governing commercially successful American windmill was invented. By the 1870s a substantial number of factories for their manufacture had been opened. As more factory-made windmills appeared on the market, the demand grew. Many buyers would assemble and erect their own windmills, but soon dealers, well drillers, and others would perform this service. On large ranches in the West, where windmills made it possible for humans and their animals to live, owners would employ crews specifically to make the rounds of servicing the windmills. Agriculturists used the power of the wind to bring up groundwater that otherwise would have to be pumped by hand.

Baker's album chapters cover windmill manufacturers and distribution, marketing, erection and maintenance, effect on western ranching, farmsteads, railroads, and urban settings. Many of the photos depict farm families posed with their farm animals in front of their homesteads and windmills. One picture shows a springtime party gathered on their farm with their windmill prominent in the background. More windmills were used on farms than anywhere else.

Another important use of windmills was along railroad tracks, where locomotives stopped to take on replacement water. In many areas local governments funded the sinking of wells and the construction of windmills for public use, including people who relied on horses and mules for transportation. In urban settings municipalities started placing windmills over public wells to provide residents with clean water. Some communities constructed entire water-work systems using windmills to pump water into central reservoirs. In the 1860s American-made windmills were exported overseas, taken by boxcar to ports for shipment over the ocean. These windmills can still be seen in southern Africa and Australia.

A photo album rich in text and carefully selected photos, *American Windmills* introduces the reader to a range of settings and uses of the windmill. From the ranch to the farm, alongside railroads, in industry and urban settings, the author takes us on a historical journey through America.

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