Foreword

Several themes wind through the remarkable histories of the King and Kenedy Ranches in South Texas: strong-willed, determined people; triumph over adversity; the building of successful businesses; working in concert with nature; and innovative problem-solving. Born and bred from outstanding human achievement, a cultural blend of Hispanic and Anglo heritages, these ranches exemplify Texas entrepreneurial spirit, ingenuity, and industry. And nowhere in these sagas is this spirit of ingenuity and industry better represented than in the lives of the people who have worked in the Wild Horse Desert. Working together, the extended families of the King and Kenedy Ranches have sustained them in a harsh, unyielding country through seven generations, forging distinct and unique ranching cultures.

This remarkable book is their story, voices that in many cases historians never expected to hear. Readers shall stand in debt to Jane Monday and Betty Colley for their enterprise in eliciting these family recollections by Kineños and Kenedeños; to Ana Carolina Castillo Crimm for an insightful introduction, which places these oral histories in historical context; and, most of all, to the ranch families themselves who recorded their memories of life in South Texas.

Los Kineños are my extended family. Having lived and worked almost my entire life on King Ranch, I am firmly convinced that the people and culture of this ongoing enterprise are its greatest asset. To them, and to the Mexican American culture which created the character and success of King Ranch, I conclude by repeating the dedication offered in Tom Lea's magisterial history, *The King Ranch*, published in 1957:

A todos aquellos hombres
Kineños de verdad
Se dedica esta obra
En reconocimiento de lo que
Les debe este rancho

Stephen J. "Tio" Kleberg
Vice President
King Ranch, Inc.