



Main Street Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

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Spotlight on Bridgeport

Population 5,600

Bridgeport is a city that is literally built upon the treasures of the earth. While the moniker can lead to the assumption that the town is located near the coast, it actually sits a mere 45 miles northwest of Fort Worth in the heart of north central Texas.

The name Bridgeport pays homage to the community's beginnings in 1860 when a toll bridge was built across the Trinity River to accommodate Butterfield's Overland Mail Company coaches. The Butterfield Overland Stage, led by John Butterfield, received a government contract in



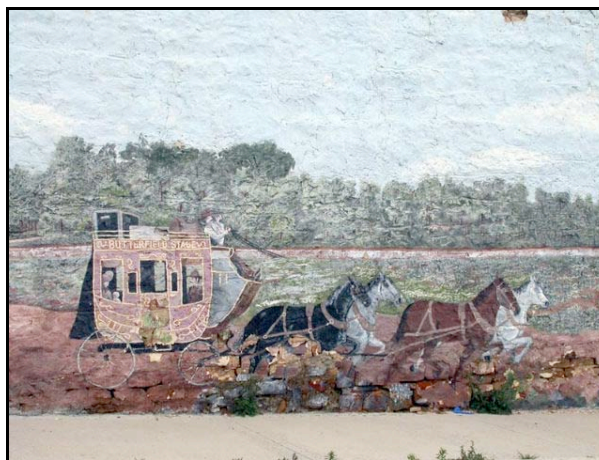
John Butterfield, aka Dr. Robert Marlett, gives visitors from the Denton Convention and Visitors Butterfield Bus Tour a taste of what life was like on the dusty stagecoach trail. Marlett is a charter member of the Bridgeport Main Street advisory board, chair of the design committee and one of the principals who helped bring the stagecoach to town.

1857 to deliver mail 2,800 miles cross-country in 25 days. In its heyday, the Butterfield employed more than 800 men, operated more than 140 stations with 1,800 head of stock and had 250 Concord and celerity coaches in service.

Over the next several decades, Bridgeport's development was closely tied to ranching and mining industries, which included coal, brick, rock, oil and gas. In fact, today Bridgeport is home to a regional office for Devon Energy Corporation, a world leader in independent oil and gas exploration and production and a key player in the Barnett Shale natural gas production.

The stone industry also continues to play a major role in the city's economic development. In the 1920s the construction of a dam across the Trinity River west of Bridgeport resulted in the creation of beautiful Lake Bridgeport, affording many opportunities for entertainment, recreation and wildlife habitat.

These industries and resources are celebrated with annual special events. Recently, Butterfield Stagecoach-related activities have taken a front seat in Bridgeport's efforts to



This Butterfield mural adorns a downtown Bridgeport building and is a focal point during the Butterfield route tours.

evolve into a destination site and promote heritage tourism.

The outbreak of the Civil War and heavy debt took its toll on the Butterfield Overland Stage Company, but its existence has been called a "catalyst in setting the path for America's westward expansion," by U.S. Rep. from Arkansas, John Boozman. Boozman is part of a movement to have the Butterfield Trail considered for a historical designation as a national trail.

Bridgeport has recognized its Butterfield roots for decades with a mural, housing development and business and street names. The annual Butterfield Stage Days Festival held in May now boasts a Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) rodeo and is drawing larger crowds than ever before.



These young dancers from Ballet Folklorico de Fort Worth performed at Bridgeport's recent Coal Miners Heritage Festival and help pay homage to the important role the Hispanic population played in settling and developing the community.

Now the community has taken its commitment giant steps forward with the acquisition this year of a life-size replica of a Concord stagecoach nearly identical to those that followed the dusty Butterfield trail.

The initiative was born with two members of the Bridgeport Main Street advisory board, Embry Hines and Dr. Robert Marlett. The coach, valued at more than \$30,000, was commissioned from an Amish artisan in Indiana and has received widespread county and community financial support. The city of Bridgeport provided \$10,000 toward the purchase, and other monies have come from private donations and fundraisers, such as the Chamber of Com-



John, Stacy and Baby Brody Brogan clown around during the 2008 Butterfield Stage Days Main Street Stickhorse Rodeo.

merce Barnett Shale Shoot and a Bridgeport Rocks run and bike race

sponsored by three local aggregate companies. Since the coach's delivery in early spring, it has become a focal point for bus tours and local events.

Bridgeport Main Street, the Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce and the Bridgeport Historical Society have partnered to take advantage of the Texas Heritage Trails Butterfield Trail promotional initiatives and have collaborated with the

Denton Convention and Visitors Bureau to host two Butterfield trail bus tours.

The Bridgeport Butterfield experience is especially unique thanks to Dr. Marlett and his wife, Carolyn, who have given the tours life with their depiction of John Butterfield and a lady traveler. Avid history buffs, the Marletts pay close attention to detail and realism and give visitors a real sense of what it was like on the Butterfield Trail.

The city of Bridgeport has plans to renovate a 1930s WPA building downtown to house Main Street, the Chamber, Visitor's Center and the Heritage Museum. Plans are for the stagecoach to ultimately be housed in a glass addition to the front of the building so visitors can enjoy this unique icon of our city night or day.

The Butterfield Overland Trail originally gave birth to Bridgeport and, some 150 years later it is generating a rebirth as we realize that we have something — many things — of value to offer our citizens and visitors.

Thanks to Angie Tyson, manager of the Bridgeport Main Street Program, for providing this article.

NEWS

Travel Statistics

In August, the Office of the Governor Economic Development and Tourism released the most recent Economic Impact of Travel in Texas statistics. Following are some of the key findings:

- Total direct travel spending in Texas was \$56.7 billion in 2007. This represents a 5.4 percent increase over the preceding year. Increased room rates and motor fuel prices were the primary inflationary factors in the travel industry.
- Texas residents accounted for one-half of all visitor spending in the state in 2006. International visitors accounted for about 10 percent and residents of other states accounted for 40 percent.
- Local and state tax revenues directly generated by travel spending were \$3.8 billion in 2007, not including property tax payments.
- Visitors who stayed overnight in commercial lodging (hotels, motels, resorts, bed and breakfasts) spent \$25.8 billion in 2007. This represents more than one-half of all visitor spending at destinations in the state.
- During 2007, travel spending in Texas directly supported 534,000 jobs with earnings of \$16.3 billion. About three-fourths of these jobs were in the leisure and hospitality sector (accommodations, food services, arts, entertainment and recreation).
- Travel spending supported jobs in other industries through the respending of travel-related revenues by businesses and individuals. The secondary impacts in

2007 were 469,000 jobs and \$16.3 billion in earnings.

- The gross domestic product (GDP) of the Texas travel industry was \$23.1 billion in 2007. Only oil and gas production and related manufacturing has a significantly greater GDP.
- Travel spending directly generated at least 100 jobs in 170 of Texas' 254 counties. Forty-seven counties had at least 1,000 jobs related to travel spending. Nine counties had more than 10,000 travel-generated jobs.
- Even though most of the travel spending and travel-generated impacts occur in the larger metropolitan areas in Texas, travel is actually more important for many of the non-metropolitan areas in the state. In terms of the relative importance of travel-generated employment, six of the top 10 counties in Texas are in non-metropolitan areas.

For the complete study results, see <http://travel.state.tx.us/EconomicImpact.act.aspx>

National Main Street Webinar, Nov. 13

Business Recruitment and Retention: Two Sides of the Same Coin is the subject of the Nov. 13 webinar put on by the National Main Street Center. Attend this seminar in the comfort of your own home or business. Registration is a great value at \$25. See www.mainstreet.org to register.

WELCOME AND GOODBYE

Welcome to Bonny Amador, the new Main Street manager in Rio Grande City (RGC).

We bid farewell to Mindy Franklin in Cotulla and wish her the best with her new husband and baby in San Antonio. We also say goodbye to Valerie Brown in RGC and congratulate her for her promotion to project manager for the RGC Economic Development Corporation.

AROUND THE STATE

Amarillo's recent successes included 11 new downtown apartments for affordable housing and a new downtown parking plaza.

The Texas Department of Agriculture awarded 21 GO TEXAN Rural Community Beautification matching grants to cities and counties that wish to improve the aesthetic appearance of their downtown areas. Congratulations to the Texas Main Street cities of **Clifton** and **Elgin** for receiving this grant.

Georgetown celebrates its first multi-storied new construction building in downtown, the Silver and Stone Restaurant and Wine Bar, which opened on Oct. 20. See www.silverstonerestaurant.com/.

EVENTS

Please remember if you want one of your Main Street events posted here, send an email to jill.robinson@thc.state.tx.us at least three weeks ahead of the month in which you want the posting.

Nov. 1, Lufkin

Gallery in the Pines Art Festival includes fine art, paintings, sculpture, jewelry, books, food, live music and much more. Hours are noon to sundown. Location will be downtown Lufkin, next door to the Pines Theater. For more information, email: aburrow@lufkintexas.org.



Texas Downtown Association/Texas Main Street Annual Conference

Howdy Partners, Creating Partnerships for Downtown is the theme of the 2008 Texas Downtown Association (TDA)/Texas Main Street Annual Conference **Nov. 11–14** in the partner cities of Temple/Belton/Salado. Enjoy tours of all three historic downtowns as well keynote Tom Moriarity speaking on “Downtowns in a Down Economy—Where Do We Go From Here?” Texas Main Street cities achieving National Recognition status will be announced at the Main Street luncheon at noon on Nov. 12 at the historic, award winning , Santa Fe Depot in downtown Temple. The conference brochure and online registration are available at www.texasdowntown.org.

Nov. 1–2, Denison

Stroll in and out of galleries and meet with artists during Denison's Fall Fine Art Tour. Location will be Main Street in downtown Denison. For information, email information@denisontexas.us.

Nov. 7–9, Waxahachie

The World War II re-enactment weekend will take place in historic downtown with period vehicles and re-enactors. The event starts with Oktoberfest and outdoor movie on Friday night and continues on Saturday with a parade, Veteran's Ceremony at the Civic Center, convoy into downtown, and the re-enactment of a battle between the Germans and the Allies. A USO dance is planned for Saturday night and a farewell breakfast on Sunday.

Nov. 8, Henderson

The Heritage Syrup Festival includes old time mule-driven syrup making on the depot museum grounds along with folk artist demonstrations and musical entertainment. Enjoy hay rides to the national register historic downtown where there will be arts and crafts, cloggers, square dancers, antique and classic cars, bluegrass and gospel music, petting zoo and childrens activities. Take in a performance presented by the Henderson Civic Theatre in the restored Opera House.

Nov. 8, Nacogdoches

Join with local galleries to celebrate artists from around the world at the 23rd Annual Art Walk. Hours will be 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6 to 9 p.m. Location will be downtown Nacogdoches. Call 936/564-2066.

Nov. 13, Levelland

The Third Annual Ladies Night Out will be held around the Hockley County Courthouse Square from 6–9 p.m. giving ladies an opportunity to make their Christmas Wish List. Participating merchants will serve their own special flair of holiday goodies to their guests while being treated to a Charles Dickens type atmosphere. Volunteers dressed in vintage costumes will serve as door-men, Christmas music will be played over the courthouse's sound system,

and horse drawn carriages will provide transportation from business to business. This event has become a great way to start the holiday shopping season with a bang.

Nov. 20, Denison

Main Street will host the first Chocolate in the Park event which will include church choirs and groups performing in the park as well as a visit from Santa. Stores will have chocolate bars for sale with the chance to win one of five golden tickets which will coordinate with prizes. Festivities will also include the Great Chocolate Challenge for corporate sponsors to enter a chocolate dessert to be auctioned. All the proceeds from the sale and auction will go to CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Grayson Co.

Nov. 20, Kilgore

Kilgore shines for the holiday season during this festive ceremony when the oil derricks are lit. Location will be downtown Kilgore. Call 903/984-3038.

Nov. 21-23, New Braunfels

Experience the German Christmas shopping market, Weihnachtsmarkt, featuring unique gift items and antiques from distinctive merchants and artisans. Location will be the New Braunfels Civic Center. See www.sophienburg.com.

Nov. 28–30, Dec. 6–7 and 13–14, Waxahachie

Downtown Victorian Christmas Festival begins with a community tree lighting and outdoor Christmas movie on Friday, Nov. 28th. Each Saturday and Sunday, Victorian characters and vendors will be present in the historic downtown. Come enjoy live entertainment, pictures with Santa, petting zoo and pony rides, carriage rides, and the Enchanted Pines E-Z Glide Outdoor ice skating rink. The annual Candlelight

Home Tour begins the Friday after Thanksgiving and features four different houses each weekend decked out in their holiday finery. Come experience all the holiday season has to offer in Historic Downtown Waxahachie!

Nov. 28–30, McKinney

Downtown McKinney's premier festival, the 28th annual Dickens of a Christmas features an old fashioned Victorian Christmas atmosphere with horse drawn carriages, strolling carolers, visits with Santa Claus, the Christmas tree lighting and activities for all ages. Seasonal music, food and children's activities provided by local not-for-profit organizations will take center stage during the event. This festive event will launch on Friday, Nov. 28 with a message from our mayor, the lighting of the tree and candlelight shopping until 8:00 p.m.

GRANTS**History Museum Grants**

The Texas Historical Commission is now accepting applications for History Museum Grants. Please help us spread the news of this grant opportunity to the local history museums in your community. Small history museums can apply for up to \$1,000 (50 percent matching grant) for conservation and preservation projects including, but not limited to, acid-free storage materials, archival storage units, environmental monitoring equipment, artifact conservation and collections management software. To view the eligibility requirements and to download an application, visit www.thc.state.tx.us/grantsincent/gramus.shtml. (Scroll down to bottom of the web page for the application form.) Application deadline is **Nov. 5.**

GO TEXAN Grants

Note: for both of the following

grants, you must be a GO TEXAN member to apply. Certified membership is open to non-metropolitan counties or cities located in rural Texas. Counties and cities eligible to apply for the GO TEXAN Rural Community Program must be located in a non-metropolitan area or a city with a population under 20,000.

Preserve America Grants

What do Nacogdoches, Fredericksburg, Marshall and the Texas Main Street Program have in common? They are the latest Texas recipients of Preserve America grants totaling \$873,615 to be used in creative ways to share their stories and historic places with residents and heritage travelers alike.

The Preserve America matching-grant program provides planning funding to designated Preserve America Communities to support preservation efforts through heritage tourism, education and historic preservation planning.

Through these grants projects our country gains a greater shared knowledge about the nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of our communities. Applications are due Tuesday, **Nov. 18**. See www.nps.gov/history/hps/hpg/PreserveAmerica/index.htm

Portal to Texas History Grants

Through funds provided by the Summerlee Foundation of Dallas, University of North Texas' (UNT) Portal to Texas History is offering digitization mini-grants to libraries, archives, museums, historical societies and other groups which hold at-risk local history materials. All of the

materials will be scanned at the Digital Imaging Lab in the Willis Library on the UNT campus in Denton. Materials scanned for the grant will be hosted in the [Portal to Texas History](#). Digitization mini-grants will be given in the range of \$25-2,500

This project promises immeasurable benefit to cultural heritage institutions by preserving at-risk historical materials. These items are in danger of being lost forever, but with the generous support of the Summerlee Foundation, UNT proposes a solution that will help prevent damage from continued handling, while making these valuable historical materials widely accessible to all Texans. The application deadline is **Dec. 15, 2008**. Scanning will begin in 2009.

Apply:
<http://texashistory.unt.edu/young/educators/Summerlee.shtml>

FAQS:
<http://texashistory.unt.edu/young/educators/SummerleeFAQ.shtml>

Hometown STARS Grant Program

The Hometown STARS (Supporting Tourism and Rural Success) matching fund reimbursement program signed to help rural communities leverage the dollars they have available to promote tourism events, in turn boosting local economies and attracting new jobs and dollars. The program will reimburse GO TEXAN Rural Community Program certified members for half of approved promotional costs up to \$10,000. Hometown STARS is a matching fund program for communities with experience managing their tourism programs and a budget that will accommodate the matching dollars required. See www.texasyes.org/ty/channel/render/

[items/0,1186,827_846_0_833,00.html](http://www.texasyes.org/ty/channel/render/items/0,1186,827_846_0_833,00.html)

Bootstrap Bucks Grant Program

The Bootstrap Bucks reimbursable funding program through the Texas Department of Agriculture is designed to help rural communities promote tourism events. Approved GO TEXAN Rural Community Program certified members can use up to \$2,500 in reimbursable funds for one of four eligible promotional items: banners, posters, newspaper advertisements and radio/television spots. Bootstrap Bucks is a reimbursable funding program for communities just beginning their tourism programs or communities adding new elements to their programs, and it has no matching fund requirement. See www.texasyes.org/ty/channel/render/items/0,1186,827_2608_0_833,00.html

CONFERENCES/ WORKSHOPS

Texas Leadership Institute Workshops

The Texas Leadership Institute (TLI), a nonprofit educational consortium, was formed to enhance the ability of the small to medium size communities in Texas to plan for sustainable economic activity by building a team of trained leaders. TLI will be offering a workshop on Developing a Historic Preservation Program in Brastrop on **Nov. 19**.

For more information on TLI or to view agendas for these workshops, see www.texasleadership.org.

Calendar of Events

2008

- **November 11–14, Temple/Belton/Salado**

Texas Downtown Association/Texas Main Street annual conference. The 2008 theme is: Howdy, Partner! Creating Partnerships for Downtown. See www.texasdowntown.org

2009

- **January 12–14, Georgetown**

Texas Main Street training for new managers.

- **February 10–13, Bastrop**

Completion of Texas Main Street training for new managers. Texas Main Street Annual Meeting will begin on Feb. 11.

- **February 11–13, Bastrop**

Texas Main Street Program Annual Meeting.

Web Sites of Interest

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: www.achp.gov
African American Heritage Preservation Foundation: www.aahpf.org
(The) Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation: www.ahlp.org
(The) Alliance for National Heritage Areas: www.cofc.edu/~heritage
American Institute of Architects: www.aiaonline.com
American Planning Association: www.planning.org
American Society of Landscape Architects: www.asla.org
(The) Cultural Landscape Foundation: www.tclf.org
Handbook of Texas Online: www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online
Institute for Cultural Landscape Studies: www.icls.harvard.edu
Keep Texas Beautiful: www.ktb.org
League of Historic American Theaters: www.lhat.org
Livable Communities Task Force:
www.blumenauer.house.gov/issues/CaucusSummary.aspx?NewsID=1077&IssueID=11
National Main Street Center: www.mainstreet.org
National Park Service: www.nps.gov
National Trust for Historic Preservation: www.nthp.org
Office of Rural Community Affairs: www.orca.state.tx.us
Preservation Easement Trust: www.preservationeasement.org/home
Preservation Directory: www.preservationdirectory.com
Preservation Texas: www.preservationtexas.org
Project for Public Spaces: www.pps.org
Rails to Trails: www.railstotrails.org
Sacred Places: www.sacredplaces.org
Scenic America: www.scenic.org
Texas Commission on the Arts: www.arts.state.tx.us
Texas Downtown Association: www.texasdowntown.org
Texas Folklife Resources: www.texasfolklife.org
Texas Historical Commission: www.thc.state.tx.us
Texas Parks and Wildlife: www.tpwd.state.tx.us
Texas Rural Leadership Program: www.trlp.org
Texas State Preservation Board: www.tspb.state.tx.us
Urban Land Institute: www.uli.org

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