

THE MEDALLION

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of the
Texas Tropical Trail Region

Leadership Letter



Dear Friends,

As the first lady of Texas, I've had the privilege to live in the Governor's Mansion, a grand historic building that has been the official home of every Texas governor since 1856. As many of you know, Governor Perry and I are personally involved in maintaining this precious historical resource as it undergoes an extensive renovation.

I believe that preserving our historic buildings is important, not just to protect the past, but to nurture the future by stimulating our local economies. A shining example is the Gage Hotel, one of my favorite historic Texas buildings. With its sweeping grandeur as wide as West Texas, the Gage was built in 1927 far away from the big cities in the small town of Marathon. After decades of neglect, J.P. and Mary Jon Bryan of Houston took it upon themselves to breathe new life into this lovely red-brick hotel and return it to its former glory, to the delight of many Texans and tourists. As I have traveled across this state, I have often seen how restored historic buildings attract tourists, boost local economies and bring an awakening to the heart of a downtown area.

I'm also grateful to the Texas Historical Commission (THC) for initiatives like the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program that work to preserve Texas courthouses. One of my favorite projects is the restoration of the Ellis County Courthouse in Waxahachie, built in 1897. I was pleased to be a part of the ribbon-cutting ceremony for this courthouse once the work was completed and I hope to continue to be a part of many more. As a big fan and active participant of the THC's Texas Main Street Program, I often see the restored finished products across Texas — the majestic downtowns. In all, I can only celebrate the commission's hard work and all the revived historic buildings that its volunteers and supporters unveil each year.

I encourage all Texans to visit our state's historic gems, from courthouses to revived downtowns. My thanks go to those individuals, including the Bryans of Houston, who privately invest in preserving Texas' past. While the beautiful old buildings are a sight to behold, it's their history that tells the story of Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Anita Perry'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anita Perry
First Lady of Texas

Donna Williams

Meet the THC's new Historic Sites Division Director

Now that the Texas Historical Commission (THC) has officially brought 18 new historic sites on board, the agency is prepared to move forward with its goal of protecting, preserving and promoting these significant cultural attractions. Charged with the monumental task of overseeing the THC's new Historic Sites Division is Donna Williams. She comes to the THC from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, where she administered the state's historic site and museum program and held various titles, including deputy state historic preservation officer and assistant executive director.

Williams previously worked for the National Park Service's cultural resources program and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. She also currently serves as an accreditation reviewer for the American Association of Museums. Williams attended Dickinson College in Carlisle, Penn. and the Cooperstown Graduate Program in History Museum Studies at the State University of New York at Oneonta.

How did you first develop an interest in historic preservation?

I grew up in a rapidly growing suburb of Washington, D.C. and really had no awareness of historic buildings or districts. I went to Dickinson College, which was established in 1783 and had a beautiful campus with many historic buildings located in an 18th and 19th century community. I became interested in the historic buildings, and I did several research projects about them as well as an



internship with a small historical society. I got hooked on historic buildings and decided to pursue a career in historic preservation and historical museums.

What do you find intriguing about the THC's 20 historic sites?

The sites are fascinating for the variety of Texas experiences that they represent. From the early site of Stephen Austin's San Felipe settlement to the homes of Dwight Eisenhower and Sam Rayburn; from the lives of enslaved Africans on a sugar plantation to the lives of wealthy merchants and those who made their riches in the growth of the oil industry. They are places where stories of Texas history, great and small, can be shared with all Texans. I'm enjoying the opportunity to learn about new-to-me chapters in our nation's history as well as different cultural, social and building traditions.

What are your goals for the near future?

In the short term, we need to make sure our historic buildings as well as our visitor services meet the needs and expectations of our visitors and develop programs that will make history come alive for Texans and visitors. In the long term, I hope the sites will become a network across the state that engages Texans in exploring how Texas became the state we know today. The sites should be showcases of historic preservation and stewardship, provide programs that explore the diversity and complexity of Texas history and culture, and play a vital role in their community's economic well being through heritage tourism.

How can Texans help you achieve these goals?

In a few short weeks on the job, it has become obvious to me how much Texans value their heritage. I'd like to welcome everyone interested in knowing more about and sharing Texas history to get involved with the historic sites program. The easiest way is to visit the sites and learn a bit about the state's history. Secondly, every site is eager to work with community organizations and volunteers to build our capabilities. Finally, I hope people will work with us as we plan for the future of each site. We want to be sure we are including many voices in the conversation about how these sites can serve their communities and the state into the future. ★

First Lady's Tour Spotlights the Importance of Partnerships

Of the many traditions that comprise the Texas Main Street Program, none is more special than the official visit by the First Lady of Texas that takes place shortly after a community's official designation as a Main Street city. Every first lady since the program's founding in 1981 has participated in these special tours, sponsored by the Independent Bankers Association of Texas (IBAT).

The Texas Main Street Program was founded in 1981 during William P. Clements, Jr.'s first term as governor of Texas. First Lady Rita Clements' participation helped showcase not only the new state program, but also brought a spotlight to the commitment the local communities had made to historic preservation and revitalization. Since then, first ladies Linda Gale White, Laura Bush and Anita Perry have participated. During Ann Richards' term as governor, Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock's wife Jan served as the designated first lady on the tours. Nellie Connally, Texas' first lady in the early 1960s prior to the formation of the program, also participated in the early tours.

"The Main Street tour is one of my favorite events each year," says Anita Perry, wife of Gov. Rick Perry. "At each visit, I am reminded that these close-knit towns and unique communities are what make our state so extraordinary. I can't think of a better way to celebrate the storied past of Texas than by joining with our neighbors to value these amazing places."



Rita Clements speaks with community members during one of the initial First Lady's Tours.

Since 1981, the four first ladies (Gov. Clements served two non-consecutive terms from 1979–1983 and 1987–1991) and Mrs. Bullock averaged 21 tours each. Since 2001, Mrs. Perry has made the official First Lady's Tour visit to 30 new Texas Main Street cities (The Texas Main Street Program takes up to five new cities each year). She will make two additional visits in 2008 to the new Texas Main Street communities of Royse City and Laredo. Each year, the celebration includes the unveiling by the first lady of an architectural rendering of a local Main Street building produced by the design staff. As the years go on, the building often

becomes known locally as the First Lady's Building.

Julian Read, widower of Texas Main Street Program founder Anice Read, recalls that his wife thought having the first ladies go on the tours "would excite the communities and would add importance to the entire program" at both the local and state level.

Susan Campbell, McKinney's first Main Street project manager, remembers that First Lady Rita Clements' visit to McKinney in 1982 set the stage for valuable media coverage. "McKinney was a relatively small town then, and to have the Dallas area press and TV stations cover her visit was huge. The reporters at that visit became media partners we worked with from that day on."

Leo Wood, the city manager in Georgetown in 1982 when the community joined the program, recalls Mrs. Clements' presence made it "a very exciting day and we had a very nice turnout. It certainly made the community feel good that the first lady would come to recognize our efforts." McKinney and Georgetown continue to be active Main Street cities.

It is highly fitting that so many groups and individuals — Mrs. Perry and her staff, IBAT, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and the local communities — work together for this event because effective partnerships are a foundation of the Main Street model.

“IBAT represents Main Street banks. That’s why we support the Texas Main Street Tour,” says Chris Williston, IBAT president and chief executive officer. “The preservation of Texas’ rich history and Texas’ community banks goes hand in hand. That is why IBAT is a proud supporter of this outstanding program.”

In recognition of its efforts and lasting partnerships with local communities and the THC, the bankers’ association received the prestigious Governor’s Award for Historic Preservation in 2005. The award was presented by Gov. and Mrs. Perry, along with THC Chairman John L. Nau, III, who also serves as chairman of the national Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

Austin architect Vince Hauser was the Seguin Main Street manager in 1981 during the program’s inaugural year; therefore, he was involved with many firsts: one of the first five Main Street managers in the state, part of one of the first state Main Street coordinating programs in the nation and part of one of the initial First Lady’s Tours. He recalls the celebration, which included both Mrs. Clements and Mrs. Connally, was “very moving.” He credits Anice Read with much of the success of the tours and the implementation of the Main Street model in Texas.

Cecilia Scott, program manager in Colorado City, says, “We found that the event gave us our first project together as a Main Street group, and we experienced tremendous community involvement and participation. The great press our community received inspired us and gave us a special taste of success.”

Adds Molly Young, program manager in Beeville, a 2006 Main Street city, “The First Lady’s Tour gave Beeville an opportunity to kick off our Main Street program in high style. It was a great way for our Main Street Advisory Board to bond and created a buzz in our community. We called out the Red Hat Ladies, law enforcement, cowboys and kids to celebrate our city’s past, present and future.”

The THC’s Janie Headrick, state coordinator of the Texas Heritage Trails Program, worked with founder Anice Read from 1986–2000 and has many fond memories of the First Lady’s Tours. She even helped managers plan the events in the days *before* email. Headrick recalls how the events helped get communities started in their historic preservation efforts.

She also remembers a horrific storm in true Texas style that unexpectedly arrived during one celebration, dropping the temperature 30 degrees in 10 minutes, with 40 mph winds that almost knocked one first lady off the podium during the ceremony.

Headrick believes the most memorable aspects of these tours, whether they’re in a small community, mid-sized town or large city, is that they’re “what our state and our country are all about.”

“To see little kids with Texas and American flags lining the streets, to hear the high school bands, to hear the Scouts saying the pledge — it really tugs at the heartstrings and makes you proud to be a Texan and an American,” she says. ★

This article was written by the THC’s Debra Farst, coordinator of the Texas Main Street Program.



Anita Perry, Texarkana, 2006



Del Rio First Lady’s Tour, 2002



Laura Bush, La Grange, 1996

The National Trust's Tips for Minimizing Energy Use in Historic Buildings

CHANGE YOUR LIGHT BULBS TO CFLs

Replacing one regular incandescent light bulb with a compact fluorescent light bulb will save 150 pounds of carbon dioxide a year.

USE LESS HOT WATER

Install low flow showerheads and do your wash in cold or warm water instead of hot water.

ADJUST THERMOSTATS

Move the thermostat down just 2 degrees in the winter and up 2 degrees in the summer to save about 2,000 pounds of carbon dioxide a year.

REDUCE ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING

Artificially lighting buildings at night is a nice effect, but turning it off just one night a week will make a significant impact.

TURN OFF ELECTRIC DEVICES

Turning off computers, lights and air conditioning when not in use will save thousands of pounds of carbon dioxide a year.

BUY ENERGY STAR APPLIANCES

Look for the Energy Star label on new appliances, light bulbs and equipment to help you choose the most energy-efficient models.

MINIMIZE USE OF EQUIPMENT

Try not to use large equipment (lawn mowers, leaf blowers, trucks, air conditioning) during the peak hours of 3 to 7 p.m.

SWITCH TO GREEN POWER

In many areas, you can switch to energy generated by clean, renewable sources such as wind and solar.

At right: A rainwater storage tank provides water for gardening, clothes washing or toilet flushing.

Going Green

Preservationists, Environmentalists Find Common Ground in Restoration

During the past decade, a battle has been brewing in historic neighborhoods throughout Texas and America. Preservationists and environmentalists are often at odds over the most responsible way to address historic structures — does their outdated design enhance or inhibit sustainability? Fortunately, areas of agreement have emerged, and both camps are beginning to negotiate peacefully over methods of accountability.

The philosophy of “green design” has been in existence since the 1970s, when architects began recognizing the importance of minimizing energy needs by using recycled or renewable building materials and incorporating water efficiency and solar power. This has once again become a high-profile issue as environmentalists strive to reduce the detrimental energy loss attributed to buildings, which produce nearly 40 percent of the planet’s harmful carbon emissions.

Austin’s Bill Moore is one of the leaders in Texas’ green building movement. Among the first to work with the city’s pioneering green building program, Moore has been involved with environmentally accountable architects and projects since graduating from the University of Texas in the early 1970s.

“When I first started, I wasn’t even trying to follow a green aesthetic, I just thought it was the most responsible way to do my job,” Moore says, adding that for a stretch of time he avoided doing projects for families with young children since the new building materials were often toxic. “Green building may not always be the cheapest, but it certainly makes the most sense because it’s more durable and efficient in the long run.”

Moore’s skills were recently broadcast nationwide thanks to his involvement with the popular TV show “This Old House.” After declining several offers to participate (due to the tremendous demands and time commitment), Moore eventually agreed to become involved after his father convinced him to take on the project — an eco-friendly addition to a historic bungalow in Austin’s Hyde Park neighborhood. The experience brought him an equal amount of acclaim and troubles.





(Left) The U.S. Green Building Council awards certification and a plaque to buildings meeting the highest sustainability performance measures.

(Below) Austin green builder Bill Moore makes new window screens from old roof decking for his "This Old House" project.



The National Trust's Tips for Conserving Resources in Historic Buildings

SEAL THE CRACKS, BLOCK THE OPENINGS

You can significantly cut greenhouse gas emissions by making sure gaps at windows and doors are properly caulked, blocking unnecessary vents and weather stripping all seams.

BUY LAPTOPS, NOT DESKTOPS

Buying laptops instead of desktops can save up to 90 percent energy per unit; don't forget to recycle your old computers.

BUY FSC CERTIFIED TIMBER

To ensure the wood you are buying has come from a properly managed forest, look for the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified timber label.

GROW NATIVE PLANTS

If you're choosing flowers or plantings for a non-historic landscape feature, buy native plants, which save the time and expense of daily watering.

USE NATURAL PRODUCTS

Buy natural paints and finishes, or water-based (latex) paints that carry little or no petroleum-based solvents.

USE RECYCLED PAPER

Make sure your printer paper is 100 percent post-consumer recycled paper. Save five pounds of carbon dioxide per ream of paper.

GO GREEN IN YOUR LANDSCAPES

Go eco-efficient by using brooms or rakes anytime you can instead of using gas-powered equipment.

START A RECYCLING PROGRAM

If you don't already have a recycling program, now is the time to start. Recycling reduces landfill and saves resources.

"It was pretty challenging with the sequencing of the work because so much was based on their filming schedule," Moore recalls. "Although it was a difficult experience, I'm OK with how it all worked out in the end."

Like Moore, preservationists across the state and country are increasingly promoting the importance of renovating existing buildings. The National Trust for Historic Preservation recently launched its Sustainability Initiative to increase awareness of conserving building materials, avoiding demolitions and promoting the use of green technologies in existing buildings. The National Trust believes preservation is culturally and socially sustainable since its goal is to conserve cultural resources for the benefit of future generations.

“I believe that historic preservation can be, and must be, a key component of any effort to promote sustainable development. Indeed, preservation is sustainability.”

— *Richard Moe, President*
National Trust for Historic Preservation

In his December 2007 acceptance speech for the esteemed Vincent Scully Prize, the National Trust's President Richard Moe said, "I believe that historic preservation can be, and must be, a key component of any effort to promote sustainable development. Indeed, preservation is sustainability."

Moe added that "embodied energy" is a key concept, especially preserving resources inherent in an existing structure. It takes energy to manufacture or extract building materials, more energy to transport them to a construction site and even more to assemble them into a building. If the structure is demolished and landfilled, Moe said, the energy locked up in it is wasted, and the process of demolition itself uses more energy, along with the construction of a new building.

— *Continued on page 16*



Traverse the **TROPICAL TRAIL**

THC's New Travel Guide Showcases Colorful South Texas Region

South Texas is indelibly tied to its Mexican heritage, which has a remarkable hold on the cultural landscape of this area. These customs and traditions are highlighted in the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) newest heritage tourism travel guide, the *Texas Tropical Trail Region*.

Many families in the region are several generations removed from their Mexican ancestry, resulting in a loss of cultural identity with their native land. Adela Ortega, chair of the Hidalgo County Historical Commission (CHC), believes it is important for these families to keep track of how customs have been practiced before they're lost forever.

"We're not celebrating some of our traditions the way they've been done for centuries — they're getting watered down and changed over time," Ortega says. "The celebration and meanings get lost when the original methods are no longer used. We need to make sure people in South Texas remain interested in these customs because they have wonderful meanings of celebration."

For instance, Ortega cites the recent shift in focus of the Dia de los Muertos holiday. Traditionally, this "Day of the Dead" honored the souls of departed loved ones through altars, skull masks, and trinkets and treats associated with the deceased. In the past few decades, Ortega notes, the holiday somehow became associated with devil worshipping, causing many Hispanic families to tone down their celebrations or forsake special customs.

Another example is the holiday tradition of homemade tamales, a customary practice for many Hispanic families at Christmas, where multiple generations gather to undertake the labor-intensive task of creating these delectable items. Now that factories produce mass quantities of inexpensive tamales conveniently available at grocery stores, some families are opting to save time and effort by purchasing them ready-made.

In response, Ortega and her CHC cohorts created a video and hosted workshops dedicated to the traditional art of making homemade tamales. She's also reaching out to schools and community organizations to educate people about the importance of maintaining cultural traditions.

"We have a lot of history and color around here, and we have beautiful customs that should not be forgotten," Ortega says. "It's kind of like historic buildings — when they get a little old, some people want to get rid of them and make way for the new. They need to be maintained and revitalized. Our traditions are just as important. They're part of who we are and where we came from."

Tropical Tour

Communities throughout the Texas Tropical Trail Region reflect the bi-nationalism and cultural traditions of Mexico and the United States. The following towns represent a geographic sampling of the attractions and landmarks in this vibrant area of the state.

— Continued on page 9



The Tropical Trail Region consists of the triangular tip of coastal plains roughly bounded by the Rio Grande, the San Antonio River and the Gulf of Mexico. To order a free copy of the *Texas Tropical Trail Region* travel guide, visit www.thc.state.tx.us or call 866/276-6219.

ALICE

Named for ranching legend Richard King's daughter, Alice became a major cattle-shipping point in the 1880s at the junction of two rail lines. After 1900, irrigation influenced agriculture development and 1930s oil discoveries brought more wealth.

The Tejano ROOTS Hall of Fame and Museum celebrates Alice as the official birthplace of Tejano music. Tejano is the borderland-style music of Conjunto with up-tempo instrumentation and modern stage presence. Museum exhibits display flashy stage clothes, instruments and photos of more than 100 Tejano stars. An annual hall of fame induction features live stage shows.

The Alice airport is home to the Maxine Flournoy Third Coast Squadron of the Commemorative Air Force. The squadron's hangar houses restored and flyable World War II planes such as a 1940 Stearman trainer, as well as vintage aircraft under restoration. Exhibits also retell the stories of Coastal Bend military personnel, including squadron namesake Maxine Flournoy, a member of the Women Airforce Service Pilots in World War II and a former THC commissioner.



EDINBURG

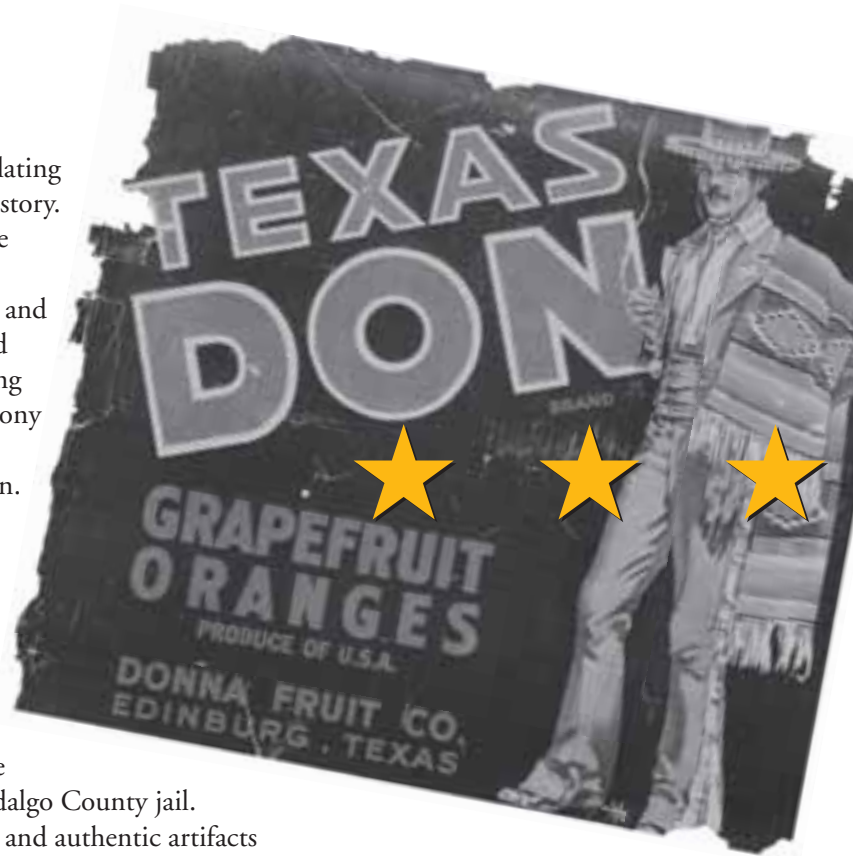
Named for the capital of Scotland, Edinburg was a ranching settlement when the first rail spur line arrived in 1909. By the time a major Southern Pacific Railroad line reached town in 1927, irrigation had turned many ranches into farms. The restored 1927 Southern Pacific depot, currently housing the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce, features memorabilia and

photos encapsulating early railroad history. Artifacts include switch locks, a conductor's cap and the gold-colored spike used during the 1927 ceremony celebrating the line's completion.

Regional heritage is elaborately interpreted at the Museum of South Texas History, which incorporates the century-old Hidalgo County jail. Replica settings and authentic artifacts trace the sweep of history across South Texas and northeastern Mexico. A world-class diorama demonstrates Coahuiltecan hunting along the Rio Grande. An early *carreta* (cart) recalls Mexican traders who transported goods between ranches on both sides of the Rio Grande. The U.S.-Mexico War exhibit recounts how the conflict divided communities and families along the border.

HARLINGEN

In 1900, successful lawyer Lon C. Hill first came to South Texas by coach and spent the night at the Paso Real Stagecoach Inn. Along the Rio Grande he saw Mexican-Americans growing abundant fruits and vegetables. He also noticed the land on the American side slopes downhill toward the Gulf. He quickly bought the property, began growing crops and built the region's first gravity-fed irrigation canals. Hill brought the first railroad to the Valley and founded Harlingen, named to honor the canal-laced ancestral Dutch home of railroad magnate Uriah Lott.



Today, this Texas Main Street city honors the town's history and Hill's 1904 home at the Harlingen Arts & Heritage Museum. Exhibits chronicle early transportation and medicine in two other structures — a replica of the 1850s Paso Real Stagecoach Inn and the first Harlingen Hospital, built in 1923 by two local businesswomen. The museum is on the grounds of a World War II gunnery school, Harlingen Army Airfield (later Harlingen Air Force Base).

Also on the former Harlingen Army Airfield grounds is the Marine Military Academy, a military preparatory school. On the school's parade grounds rises the original working model of the Iwo Jima Monument that stands at Arlington National Cemetery. The school also includes a museum of Marine Corps memorabilia and the grave of Corporal Harlon H. Block, the only Texan depicted in the famous statue.

Opposite page: Folklorico dancers, Corpus Christi; Tropical Trail brochure. Above: Fruit label, Donna Fruit Co., Edinburg.



Kenedy enhanced his fame and fortune as a cotton trader and railroad magnate and became the namesake of Kenedy County. Kenedy married into a prominent Mexican family and, though a Quaker, accepted the Catholic faith of his wife, Petra Vela de Vidal. Also a devout Catholic, their granddaughter, Sarita Kenedy East (for whom the town is named), eventually donated the Kenedy fortune to charitable foundations, one of which operates the museum, housed in the 1927 Kenedy Ranch headquarters.

KINGSVILLE/SARITA

Consummate 19th-century entrepreneur Richard King forged fortunes in steamboats and ranching. The King Ranch he and his wife Henrietta began on the Wild Horse Desert remains one of Texas' largest ranches at 825,000 acres — larger than Rhode Island. King was among the first to trail Texas Longhorns from Mexico to Midwest markets. Later innovations, from cattle and horse breeding and disease control to artesian well drilling and pasture improvement, made King Ranch the “birthplace of American ranching” and a National Historic Landmark.

The King Ranch Visitor Center offers guided tours along an old stagecoach road past grazing Texas Longhorns, a mid-1800s commissary and Mrs. King's 1909 carriage house and 1913 home. Nearby is a restored 1904 mercantile store, now home to the King Ranch Saddle Shop. The clothing and leather goods store once supplied gear only to King Ranch cowboys, known as *Los Kineños* (King's people). The store also has exhibits and photos on ranch history. The complete ranch story unfolds at the King Ranch Museum, housed in a restored early-1900s ice plant. The museum showcases impressive

ranch photos from the 1940s, various saddles and firearms, plus unusual carriages and cars.

Located 20 miles south of Kingsville in the small community of Sarita, the Kenedy Ranch Museum maintains the legacy of the Mifflin Kenedy family. For nearly a quarter century, Kenedy partnered with long-time friend Richard King in riverboat and ranching endeavors, then the two built separate ranching empires. Kenedy eventually accumulated 400,000 acres and was among the first ranchers to hold cattle inside wire fences. Kenedy, like King, was the *patrón* of his ranch hands, who proudly called themselves *Kenedeños* (Kenedy's people).

REFUGIO

In 1793, Spanish friars built their last Texas mission nearly 30 miles northwest of here. Two years later, Nuestra Señora del Refugio (Our Lady of Refuge) Mission was relocated to present-day Refugio. Karankawa resistance and Comanche raids closed the mission in 1824. Irish immigrants of the 1830s rebuilt the mission church and named the town Refugio. A 1901 Gothic Revival incarnation of Our Lady of Refuge Church sits on the original mission site.



The original mission bell is the star of the Refugio County Museum. The museum retells town development, as well as how the county became a center for ranching, farming and oil production. One exhibit recounts the Battle of Refugio, a Texas Revolution skirmish in which Mexican ranchers and troops captured the town and executed Texian fighters. Another exhibit notes the local Royal Irish Regiment, one of the first volunteer military units formed before World War II.

SAN BENITO

Like most border towns, San Benito was born with the arrival of irrigation and the railroad. Anglo farmers hired locals to clear brushland and build canals, and town founder Sam A. Robertson brought in the San Benito and Rio Grande Valley Railroad. The San Benito Historical Society Museum uses historic photos to tell the stories of early settlers.

Hispanic music flourishes in three heritage sites located in the Cultural Heritage Museum. The Texas Conjunto Music Hall of Fame

& Museum chronicles the evolution of Conjunto, an early form of Tejano or “Tex-Mex” music. European, Mexican and American music merged in the early 1900s as working-class musicians on both sides of the border played the accordion and the bajo sexto (12-string guitar) in a style dubbed Conjunto (Spanish for “group”). Players such as Narciso Martinez, Santiago Almeida, Santiago Jimenez, Sr. and Valerio Longoria made the music popular across South Texas and beyond.

Named for the “Father of Conjunto,” the Narciso Martínez Cultural Arts Center preserves and promotes Mexican and Mexican-American heritage through art, film and literature, as well as performances of music, theater and dance. Every September, the center hosts the Narciso Martinez Conjunto Festival. San Benito is also home to one of South Texas’ most historic dancehalls, La Villita, which regularly hosts Conjunto dances, and to The Freddy Fender Museum, which highlights the life and career of the Grammy-Award winning Mexican-American rocker and San Benito native born as Baldemar Huerta. ★



Opposite page: Working model of Iwo Jima Monument, Harlingen; Marine Military Academy, Harlingen; Mifflin Kenedy’s brand; Kenedy Ranch Museum, Sarita; 1880s commissary, King Ranch, Kingsville.

On the cover: In the 1930s, date palms like this were planted in South Texas to allure new residents. Photo courtesy Dimmit County Public Library and Wade House Memorial Museum.

The Annual Historic Preservation Conference Comes to Corpus Christi



The Texas Tropical Trail Region is the destination for the THC’s Annual Historic Preservation Conference, to be held May 1–3 in Corpus Christi at the Omni Bayfront Hotel. Make sure you’re included by registering before the April 18 deadline. “Explore the Sites and Stories of Texas” offers three days of workshops, special sessions and tours

for preservationists, historians, teachers, students and the public, sponsored by the THC in association with Preservation Texas. The opening session of the conference will feature keynote speaker Berkeley Young of North Carolina-based Young Strategies, Inc. discussing trends in cultural and heritage tourism. Workshop topics include The Role of Interpretation in Creating Sustainable Heritage Experiences and a special workshop for county historical commissions. Other sessions include Culinary Tourism; Fundraising for Preservation Projects; Establishing, Cultivating and Maintaining Partnerships; Creative Marketing and Promotional Opportunities; and The Mod Squad: Mid-Century Architecture in Urban and Coastal Texas.

Join the THC for these special conference highlights and much more at the 2008 Annual Historic Preservation Conference. While in Corpus Christi, visit the heritage tourism sites highlighted in the *Texas Tropical Trail Region* travel guide. To request a conference brochure or for more information, call 512/463-6255.





“These narratives represent important aspects of the story not yet fully told.”

— William McWhorter, coordinator
THC’s Military Sites Program

army training centers for ground and mechanized forces. Texas represented only 5 percent of the nation’s total population during World War II, yet contributed more than 7 percent (750,000-plus) of the troops to the United States Armed Forces. Hundreds of facilities were constructed or enhanced to meet the growing needs of nearly 1.5 million service men and women, as well as nearly a half-million war production workers who came to Texas. This rapid increase in war materiel production caused overall manufacturing in the state to quadruple from 1940 to 1945.

Simultaneously, the nearly 1.5 million men and women who made Texas their wartime home brought with them their own customs and cultural beliefs. The resulting mix of experiences and perspectives of native-

born Texans and wartime transplant Texans resulted in statewide social, cultural and economic changes in Texas in the post-war years.

Presently, the THC is planning a busy year of commemoration, including efforts to coordinate with the Nueces County Historical Commission and other preservation-minded organizations for the American G.I. Forum of Texas marker, honoring an organization founded by Mexican-American veterans in response to their discourteous treatment at home after the war. The forum and its women’s auxiliary pushed for civil rights through the G.I. Bill of Rights and other federal veteran’s aid programs.

In 2009, the Victory Grill historical marker will denote the site of an East Austin blues club that served as a major entertainment area

for African American soldiers who, due to segregation, did not have full access to USO facilities during the war.

“Throughout this national crisis, World War II exposed many Texans to new experiences and perspectives both overseas and stateside, and these vital stories need to be shared with future generations,” McWhorter says. “Our agency’s 21 special markers will create a lasting tribute to these events and this significant time in Texas and world history.” ★

This article was written by the THC’s Military Sites Program staff.

Opposite page: Aztec Eagles; marker commemorating Oveta Culp Hobby and the Women’s Army Corps. Above: Crystal City Alien Family Internment Camp marker dedication.

STRONG

STEADFAST AND

East Texas' Alabama-Coushatta Tribe Remains Vital During Troubled Times



Pictured (from left): 105-year-old Alabama Chief John Scott with his daughter and two granddaughters in 1911; Current Alabama-Coushatta Principal Chief Oscola Clayton M. Sylestine. Photos courtesy of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe.

The Alabama and Coushatta tribes have experienced a difficult yet proud legacy in East Texas for more than two centuries. They were continually threatened by westward expansion, but received significant support from Gen. Sam Houston. Settlers seized their land yet the tribe members remained steadfast and strong. To this day, they continue to maintain their humble roots near the Big Thicket National Preserve 80 miles northeast of Houston.

Tribe member Arnold Battise is intent on keeping the Alabama-Coushatta tribe viable in the 21st century and stresses the importance of members understanding and appreciating their storied heritage. Battise was born on the Alabama-Coushatta reservation and spent his professional career in Houston as an attorney and federal judge before returning to his people upon retirement.

According to Battise, the first historical reference to the Alabama tribe was in 1541 by Spanish explorer DeSoto, who noted its presence in the area that would become the state of Alabama. The tribe moved westward “ahead of the oncoming hordes” to Mississippi and Louisiana before eventually settling in East Texas (Mexico at the time), circa 1787. The Coushattas followed a similar path through history, and eventually joined the Alabamas in East Texas.

The first significant historical reference to the Alabama tribe came during the fight for Texas independence, when it was involved with assisting Texian settlers during the Runaway Scrape in 1836.

“We helped them with food, shelter and crossing the Trinity River,” Battise explains. “Sam Houston was a friend to the Indians, so when he learned about our assistance, he became instrumental in having a reservation awarded to our tribe.”

Since then, the Alabama-Coushatta have existed relatively peacefully with their neighbors among the dense forest abutting the Big Thicket. Despite receiving some federal assistance, they have struggled financially to remain viable. They implemented a tourism program with a historic train excursion and tribal dances and food for roughly two decades (late 1960s–80s) but it ultimately became a financial burden. A successful entertainment center venture offering “games of chance” existed for nine months in 2001–02 before it was shut down for legal reasons.

The tribe still offers occasional tours on summer weekends, and they host a popular annual pow-wow in early June. They’re also developing a tribal court system to help revise their constitution’s membership regulations. Currently, they are the only Native American group requiring members to be full-blooded, Battise says.

“We want to survive and sustain ourselves as a tribe and a culture,” he adds. “We are a sovereign government. We emphasize that, but still need revenue to keep our culture alive.”

Last year, Battise offered native language classes to tribe members, but there wasn’t as much interest as he had hoped. Of the approximately 1,100 Alabama-Coushatta, he estimates nearly 300 speak the traditional language. Regardless, he finds optimism in the fact that 99 percent of the tribe members return to the reservation after spending their professional lives in nearby towns, international cities and the military.

“We’ve changed our perspective because of what’s going on in the modern world, but we want to be sure we maintain our long-standing heritage and culture,” Battise says. “We don’t want to lose what’s most important to us. We must preserve it.” ★

This article was written by Andy Rhodes, managing editor of The Medallion.

To learn more about the Alabama-Coushatta, visit www.alabama-coushatta.com or call 936/563-1100.

Where There's a Will, There's a Way to Help the Texas Historical Commission

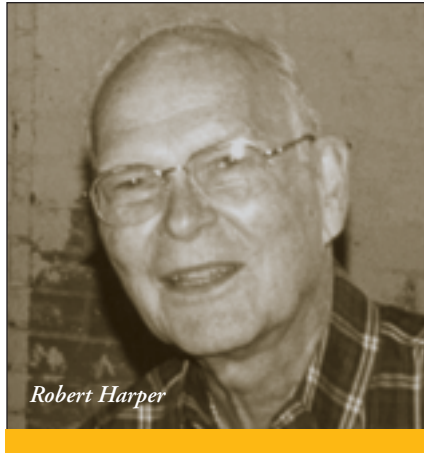
Do you have a will? If you don't, you are not alone. Less than half of all Americans have made formal bequests, leaving their heirs subject to estate taxes and allowing less for family, friends and charitable organizations as beneficiaries.

Someone who has made such plans for his estate is Robert D. Harper of San Antonio. A lifelong lover of Texas history, Harper has included in his bequest charities he knows will continue to preserve and promote the rich cultural legacy of the Lone Star State. One of his beneficiaries is the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission, the nonprofit affiliate of the Texas Historical Commission (THC). Intrigued by an article featuring the excavation of La Salle's lost ship, *La Belle*, he decided to support historic preservation through a charitable donation.

"An article on the discovery of *La Belle* really interested me and inspired me to contribute to its recovery," he says. "As the agency that made possible the recovery of the remains and artifacts, the Texas Historical Commission performed a wonderful and valuable service to us all."

Later, as he was making his estate plans, Harper added the THC to his bequest through the Friends organization. What does he hope to accomplish by leaving a legacy?

"I hope my bequest will help the commission in its efforts to restore and preserve as much of Texas' glorious history as is humanly possible," he says.



Robert Harper

“Our state is unique and as many Texans as possible should join in the mission to keep our history alive.”

— Robert D. Harper
San Antonio, TX

Harper has been fascinated with history since childhood. "In 1936 my folks took me to Dallas to see the Texas Centennial Exposition," he recalls. "The Centennial was the most exciting and wonderful thing any 10-year-old could ever see. It still holds a special place in my memory and probably inspired my passion for Texas and all things 'Texian.' Every day I thank the good Lord that I was born a Texan!"

Harper flies the U.S. flag each day of the year, except for the week beginning on Texas Independence Day (March 2) through the end of San Antonio's Fiesta, when he raises the Texas flag every day instead.

Harper graduated from high school in 1944 and joined the U.S. Navy. After the war, he received bachelor's and master's degrees, taught school for seven years, worked at the Texas Employment Commission and retired in 1982.

"Once I retired, I promised myself I'd go to the State Fair in Dallas each year to relive my childhood experiences," he says. "When the Friends of Fair Park began the restoration and preservation of the Centennial buildings, I began making donations to help them along. Now when I go to the fair and see what has been accomplished, I'm proud that I've had a small part in these projects."

Harper's passion for historic preservation inspired a generous commitment to the future through his charitable bequest. Like Benjamin Franklin, whose will is still providing benefits after more than two centuries, Harper's wish is to leave a legacy that will keep on giving over the years.

"I hope others will also be inspired to help in this wonderful cause," he says. "Our state is unique, and as many Texans as possible should join in the mission to keep our history alive." ★

Would you like to follow their examples? If you are interested in including the THC in your estate plans, please contact the agency's development officer, Toni Turner, at 512/936-2241 or toni.turner@thc.state.tx.us.

Green Building and Historic Preservation Find Common Ground

— Continued from page 7

Officials at the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) add that preservation maximizes the use of existing materials and infrastructure, thereby reducing waste. The NIBS claims historic buildings were designed with sustainable features responding to climate and site — tall ceilings and windows to take advantage of air and light diffusion, for example — so they can provide substantial energy savings when effectively restored and reused.

Moore agrees, saying, “With historic houses, I like to keep the Hippocratic Oath in mind — do no harm. My goal is to maintain the aesthetic as much as possible.”

According to Moore, one of the most important aspects of a preservation project is to utilize as much of the existing lumber as possible since this wood from old-growth forests is far superior to the limited lifespan of current wood. For example, with his “This Old House” project, Moore used wood removed from the rafters for the new stairwell, and wood from portions of the roof for the window screens.

He also suggests using spring bronze weather-stripping on windows in historic homes to make them air tight, and to identify and insulate air leaks in crawl spaces, the attic, and around plumbing and wiring. Above

all, Moore stresses to make every effort to retain historic buildings since the embodied energy alone is preserved, and the environmental issues can be addressed.

“There’s no reason to tear something down just because it’s old,” he says. “My personal aesthetic, and it’s because I come from a construction background, is that I want my hard work to stick around. I feel the same way about most historic properties — they should be preserved for the future to appreciate all the quality craftsmanship that’s been put into them.” ★

This article was written by Andy Rhodes, managing editor of The Medallion.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION



ANNUAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

May 1–3, 2008
Omni Bayfront Hotel
Corpus Christi, Texas

EXPLORE THE SITES AND STORIES OF TEXAS

Now YOU Know!

The Boy Scouts' official slogan is "do a good turn daily." You don't hear too many people using the word "turn" to describe an act of kindness these days, but the idea of this old-time word and the positive impact of Scouting are still important, especially when it comes to preserving Texas history.

In small towns and big cities across the state, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts serve their communities with clean up and restoration efforts along with other projects that benefit area residents. The biggest impact a Scout can have on his or her community is through a major service endeavor. For Boy Scouts, this is accomplished with the lofty Eagle Scout project, while Girl Scouts can achieve the Gold Award. Both projects are significant undertakings involving many hours of planning, organization and implementation.

Sam Collins, an advisor with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, has been working with several Scouts on Eagle projects in the Houston area that greatly assist local preservation efforts. Jarren Small took on the task of cleaning the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) severely neglected markers in Kendleton, a significant African American community southwest of Houston. In Galveston, Scout Sean Moran cleaned up and built a fence around the historically important Rosewood Cemetery, the city's first African American cemetery, officially designated as a historical burial ground by the THC.

"These are both great Eagle Scout projects — I hope other youth and adults will be similarly motivated to get involved," Collins said. "These types of projects bring increased

attention to historical sites and issues, increased tourism dollars for the community, and assistance for preservation organizations with limited resources."

Collins hopes Scouts across Texas will consider similar endeavors for their major service projects or even as a group activity. You don't even have to be a Scout to follow his advice on how to start organizing a project that will benefit historic preservation in your town.

To get started, Collins suggests contacting a local preservation organization (county historical commission, a local heritage museum) and meet with someone to discuss how you can help. Potential ideas include working with your chamber of commerce on how to attract tourists to the historical sites in your area, cleaning up historical

At left: Sam Collins and Sean Moran in Galveston; right: Jarren Small, Marjorie Adams and Collins.



To learn more about Scouting or to find a chapter in your community visit the Boy Scouts of America web site at www.scouting.org or the Girl Scouts of the USA at www.girlscouts.org.

markers and the areas surrounding them, or uploading marker information to the comprehensive and informative Historical Marker Database (www.hmdb.org).

Collins reinforces the importance of these types of preservation projects by referencing a quote attributed to fourth-century Roman philosopher Saint Augustine: "The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only one page."

"Texas is a great state with a very storied past, and everyone can help add more details to each page in the history of this state," Collins says. "By getting involved, Scouts help to tell the story of Texas history. They help preserve the state's heritage for generations to come." ★

This article was written by Andy Rhodes, managing editor of The Medallion.

Caldwells Receive Inaugural Humanities Texas Award

Six books on Texas history, a combined 26 years of service on the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and a bookstore specializing in Texas and Western history are just a few of the many accomplishments that have earned Shirley and Clifton Caldwell of Albany, Texas an inaugural Humanities Texas Award. The award recognizes imaginative leadership in the humanities on a local, regional or state level and was presented in a special ceremony in the Senate Chamber of the Texas State Capitol on January 24.

“Shirley Caldwell’s passion for Texas history is matched only by her husband, Clifton’s,” said THC Chairman John L. Nau, III. “They have spent untold time and resources documenting and promoting Texas’ rich cultural heritage and the THC has greatly benefited from their vision and leadership.”

Shirley Caldwell recently completed 12 years of service on the THC. Clifton Caldwell served three terms between 1969 and 1983, acting as chair from 1973–75. Both Caldwelles have authored books on Texas history and together established the Clifton and Shirley Caldwell Texas Heritage Series at the University of Texas Press. They have served on the Texas State Historical Association, the Dallas County Historical Commission, the Shackelford County Historical Commission and the Center for Big Bend Studies.

Humanities Texas is the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Established by Congress in 1965, the National Endowment for the Humanities supports research, educational and public programs.



Gov. Rick Perry congratulates Clifton and Shirley Caldwell at the Capitol.

Mercado-Allinger Receives Top Honor at Archeological Conference

State Archeologist Pat Mercado-Allinger of the THC’s Archeology Division recently became a Fellow of the Texas Archeological Society (TAS). This honor is the most prestigious award given by TAS, the oldest and largest archeological organization in the state. The Fellow award is given to a TAS member for major contributions to TAS and to Texas archeology.

Mercado-Allinger has been state archeologist since 1996 and is responsible for directing programs involving original research, landowner assistance, historic preservation planning, coordination with historic preservation and archeological organizations, public outreach and the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network. She is very involved with the coordination of annual Texas Archeology Month observances and has traveled throughout the state to conduct archeological investigations, meet with local societies and foster awareness and appreciation of Texas’ archeological heritage.

For more information on TAS and its Fellow award visit www.txarch.org. To learn more about the THC’s Archeology Division and its programs visit www.thc.state.tx.us.

Battle of San Jacinto Symposium Set

The eighth annual Battle of San Jacinto Symposium will be held on April 19 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Hilton Hotel and Conference Center at the University of Houston.

The event’s theme is “Expanding the Horizons of Texas History,” and its speakers will address events of the Texas Revolution through the eyes of a novelist, a Mexican borderlands historian and a school teacher, to name a few.

For additional information or to register, contact the Friends of the San Jacinto Battleground at 281/496-1488 or visit www.friendsofsanjacinto.org.

New Book Chronicles Bob Bullock’s Compelling Career

Those who enjoy Texas history and politics will likely be interested in the new book *Bob Bullock, God Bless Texas* by Dave McNeely and Jim Henderson. The veteran political writers draw on their decades of experience covering politics at the Texas Capitol to document Bullock’s complex and intriguing life and career.

“Bob Bullock was a friend of the Texas Historical Commission and this fascinating book reflects the passionate personality behind the man who so loved Texas,” said Larry Oaks, executive director of the THC. “I would recommend this book to anyone wanting to learn more about a man who really understood Texas government and Texas politics.”

This detailed biography chronicles Bullock’s rise through state government and his achievements, including hiring an unprecedented number of women and minorities, instituting a performance review to increase the efficiency of state agencies and restructuring the public school funding system.

For more information about *Bob Bullock, God Bless Texas* contact the University of Texas Press at 800/252-3206 or www.utexas.edu/utpress. ★



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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Our Mission

To protect and preserve the state's historic and prehistoric resources for the use, education, enjoyment and economic benefit of present and future generations.

Cathy Lazarus

Robertson County Historical Commission

How long have you been serving with your CHC? I joined the CHC in 1999 and became chair in 2001. For me, history is fun. The opportunity to share our county's legacy is an honor.

What are your group's most memorable projects?

Our commission has many joint projects throughout the county. Our philosophy is to provide a small advisory group that enables local folks to plan, develop and sustain their historical sites and stories. Our primary goal is to inspire community projects that will capture the character of their local heritage. One annual project we have implemented is a countywide art contest called "Pictures of Our Past" resulting in a school-year calendar based on historic sites, people and events.

What interesting projects are your CHC members currently undertaking?

We are partnering with local groups in the preservation of historic buildings, including the Franklin Carnegie Library, Hearne Railroad Depot, Calvert's American Woman's League 1909 Chapter House, Wheelock Community Center and Calvert's Rosenwald School. There are also efforts to provide interpretive exhibits to tell our county's stories as they relate to Bremond's Polish Heritage, Hearne's World War II prisoner-of-war camp, the El Camino Real de los Tejas and our general contribution to the early development of Texas.



What THC programs have been most effective in your county? The historic marker and cemetery designations are projects our residents can achieve on their own that deliver great satisfaction and community pride. We are quite proud of the fact that our first five

historic cemetery applications came from our African American neighbors.

What have you found is the most effective way of working with your county officials and county residents to keep them interested and active in historic preservation?

Our interaction with our county officials is always apolitical and only as needed. As a sparsely populated agricultural county, we have not received a large operating budget. To promote our preservation efforts, we worked to get a county hotel occupancy tax. These revenues will not only help us promote tourism, but help fund significant stabilization/restoration projects. Not asking for money always helps one's relationships. The more we discover, repair and promote our county's heritage, the more our residents learn, assimilate and enjoy.

How are you addressing outreach efforts to include diverse cultural groups?

By attrition, we are now a group of 11 interested members that represent each of our major five communities. Many members have ties to their local historical societies and work as liaisons between our local and county levels. We always invite all cultural groups to contribute to our projects and stress honest diversity to be represented in all final products. ★

WHERE ON EARTH...IN TEXAS

Where on Earth? You tell us! Write to the Texas Historical Commission, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276. You also may fax your answer to 512/463-6374 or email it to medallion@thc.state.tx.us. The first three people who correctly guess the site will be named with the answer in the May/June issue of *The Medallion*. The first correct mail answer will be counted, even if correct emails and faxes arrive first. Limit one prize annually per contestant.

Want a clue? This stone carving is located atop the door of a museum in the Panhandle.



Answer to the photo from the last issue: The statue pictured at left depicts Billy the Kid in downtown Hico, circa 70 miles northwest of Waco. Legend claims local resident Brushy Bill Roberts went to the grave knowing he was the real Billy the Kid. Hico commemorates this legacy with a museum and gravesite.

Congratulations to the many readers who submitted correct answers. The first three to respond were Betty Greenhouse of Shepherd, Paula Riker of Hamilton and Dr. Charles Tandy of Dallas. Winners will receive prizes from our Texas Heritage Trails Program, the Texas Historical Commission's regional tourism initiative, as tokens of our appreciation for taking part in the fun. Thanks to all participants!



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SECOND NOTICE

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