
THE

MEDALLION

Marshall's Mystique

**Railroad, African American Legacies
Shape Northeast Texas City's Heritage**



THC Announces Annual Preservation Award Winners

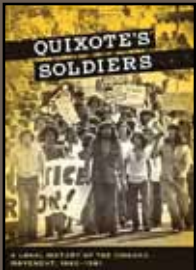
THC Honors Book Award Winners

The T.R. Fehrenbach Book Award was presented to three noteworthy authors at the THC's annual conference.



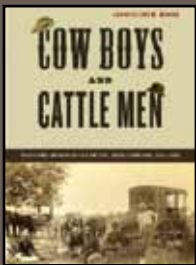
William S. Clayson's book *Freedom is Not Enough* focuses on Texas in the 1960s and examines how President Lyndon Johnson's War

on Poverty manifested itself in a state marked by racial division, diversity, and endemic poverty.



David Montejano's *Quixote's Soldiers* addresses the interaction among members of different social backgrounds in

San Antonio's Chicano community during the turbulent and politically creative years of the late 1960s and early 1970s.



Jaqueline M. Moore's *Cow Boys and Cattle Men* delves into the new truths of the Old West by casting aside romantic images

of cowboys through an analysis of the class, gender, and labor histories of ranching in Texas during the second half of the 19th century.

Each year, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) presents prestigious awards to notable individuals and organizations to emphasize outstanding contributions to preserving Texas' historic resources. The following people were recently honored at the 2011 Annual Historic Preservation Conference in Austin:

■ **The Ruth Lester Lifetime Achievement Award** was presented to **Jean Ann Ables-Flatt** of Terrell. A former THC commissioner, Ables-Flatt also served for eight years as chair of the Kaufman County Historical Commission and is immediate past president of the Hiram Bennett Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

■ **The Curtis D. Tunnell Lifetime Achievement Award in Archeology** was presented to **Teddy Lou Stickney** of Midland. Stickney has been a prominent avocational archeologist since she joined the Texas Archeological Society in 1965. She helped launch what is now known as Texas Archeology Month and is renowned for her work recording the state's rock art.

■ **The George Christian Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award** was presented to **Randy Riepe** and **Pastor Robert Robertson** for their efforts in protecting and preserving the 1896 College Memorial Park Cemetery, one of Houston's largest historic African American cemeteries.

■ **The John L. Nau, III Award of Excellence in Museums** was presented to San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts Director **Howard Taylor**. The award recognizes Taylor's 26 years of work to preserve historic buildings, educate and involve the community, and offer beneficial exhibits.

■ **The Anice B. Read Award of Excellence in Community Heritage Development** was presented to **Robert Montgomery** of Denton. Montgomery

has organized historical tours and helped to develop a heritage tourism project centered on the Butterfield Overland Trail.

■ **The Award of Excellence in Preserving History** was presented to two recipients. **Rudi Rodriguez** of San Antonio has extensively researched Tejano history on www.TexasTejano.com, authored several books, and helped organize the Hispanic Heritage Center of Texas. The **Baylor Institute of Oral History** provided training and outreach at 24 statewide oral history workshops involving the THC's Texas in World War II initiative.

■ **The Award of Excellence in Media Achievement** was presented to "**The Shape of Texas**," a radio program produced by South Texas Public Broadcasting that has aired more than 520 episodes on Texas history and architecture on 13 stations throughout Texas.

■ **The Award of Excellence in Historic Architecture** was presented to **Clayton&Little Architects** of Austin. One of the firm's recent high-profile projects was restoring the Byrne-Reed House in Austin, which serves as the headquarters for Humanities Texas.

■ **The John Ben Shepperd County Historical Commission Leadership Award** was presented to **Doug Braudaway** of Del Rio. Braudaway has worked extensively to document, preserve, and promote local heritage for the Val Verde County Historical Commission. ★

Challenging History

THC Keynote Speaker Promotes Undertold Heritage with Slave Cabin Project

Joseph McGill, Jr., sleeps in slave cabins. It is not a comfortable experience (physically or emotionally), but he believes that in life, greater challenges bring greater rewards.

McGill works as a program officer with the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Southern Field Office in Charleston, South Carolina. Like many preservationists, his free time is spent as an advocate, heritage traveler, and history junkie.

During the National Trust's October 2010 conference in Austin, Texas Historical Commission (THC) staff attended McGill's session about his Slave Cabin Project. McGill has been sleeping in slave cabins in South Carolina and Alabama to draw attention to these seldom-preserved structures. During his site visits, he engages host communities in broader discussions about heritage, preservation, and culture, and what it means to save the real places that tell the real stories.

McGill's passion for connecting with history, experiencing the power of place, and sharing those stories with a broader audience resonated with the attendees' collective preservation mission. As a result, he was asked to serve as keynote speaker for the THC's 2011 Annual Historic Preservation Conference in April. In addition to featuring the important work associated with the Slave Cabin Project, THC staff determined it would be an opportunity for preservationists to discuss being more inclusive when telling their stories and preserving their resources.

"Part of the problem, is that we've been teaching people to tell the

happy part of the story, while the parts that are shameful or less significant become footnotes," McGill said in his keynote speech. "I decided to use all my pent-up energy about this not to complain, but to do something. I became the voice of these forgotten buildings."



In anticipation of McGill's arrival, THC staff searched for standing slave quarters in Texas to contribute to the collection of his experiences. Ravaged by weather and neglect, it appeared most of the slave cabins on Texas plantations had been demolished over time. However, two sites were identified and selected for McGill's March 2011 visit.

Days before his conference keynote address, McGill slept in two significant examples of slave cabins in Texas—the Egypt Plantation in Wharton County and the Seward Plantation in Washington County. Both plantations are owned and cared for by descendants of the original plantation families. Hank and Peggy Ward, owners of the Seward Plantation, and Bud Northington, owner of the Egypt Plantation, are deeply committed to preserving their respective

plantations and the history each property holds.

These owners, like McGill, recognize that without these structures, the stories of enslaved African Americans are inevitably threatened with dismissal or are forgotten. McGill's visit to Texas brought home the rarity of this building type within the statewide inventory of cultural and historic resources.

"With this in mind, our challenge is to find these important places and to accurately and eloquently tell these important stories," says Bratten Thomason, director of the THC's History Programs Division. "The reward is establishing a connection to history that elevates our self-worth and respect for others."

For more information on McGill's Slave Cabin Project and his experience in Texas, visit the Statewide Preservation Plan for Texas online at www.preservationconnection.com. This website can also be used as a resource for sharing information about existing structures in Texas still tied to slavery. ★

This article was written by Amy Hammons and Tracey Silverman, program committee co-chairs for the THC's 2011 annual conference.

THC annual conference keynote speaker Joseph McGill spent the night in this cabin on the Egypt Plantation northwest of Houston as part of his Slave Cabin Project.



Conservation, Courthouses, Communities

Sustainability Plays a Role in Historic Courthouse Preservation

Courthouse sustainability—an oxymoron? How can old buildings so steeped in the traditions and trappings of Western culture possibly adapt to cutting-edge technology designed to save the Earth's resources?

Some would argue we must throw the baby out with the bath-water by sacrificing these community landmarks to reach our goals of a sustainable future. Yet each completed restoration project throughout Texas proves otherwise by giving new life to downtowns and diverting thousands of tons of demolition waste from landfills.

With more than 10 years of restoration experience, the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program (THCPP) continues to integrate modern systems and efficiency practices into hundred-year-old structures to help them last into the next century.

A total of \$227 million in state funding has been distributed to 82 counties to assist in courthouse preservation planning and construction projects. The number of fully restored courthouses will total 55 by the end of the year.

"Recycling these landmarks involves much more than preserving pretty façades," says THCPP Director Stan Graves. "We typically replace every mechanical, electrical, and plumbing system, plus improve accessibility, security, and sound issues, to give the county an efficient and comfortable place to do business."

Replacing outdated mechanical systems with high-efficiency ones has been a key component of grant projects since the THCPP began in 1999. Nearly 20 percent of courthouses restored by grant funding have used geo-exchange systems instead of more conventional units.

These systems, also called ground source heat pumps, use the earth's constant temperature to heat air in winter and cool it in summer by circulating refrigerant through piping below ground. While the installation cost can be somewhat higher than other types of systems, they are typically 40 percent more efficient than many conventional systems, with an expected longer lifespan. Since all exterior equipment is typically buried, courthouse squares retain a more pristine appearance, with uncluttered views of the building.

The federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA, or Stimulus Act) funded hundreds of grants to cities and counties throughout Texas to improve energy efficiency. THC courthouse staff reviewed projects for 30 historic courthouses to install new fluorescent or LED (light emitting diode) light fixtures, replace centralized

heating and cooling units or system controls, add "ductless" heating and cooling in place of window units, and re-roof with lighter-colored, reflective "cool" roofing.

A few counties also made plans to add solar photovoltaic panels or vegetated roofing to flat roofs behind parapets, out of view from street level. Federal allotments and grants ranged from \$23,000 in rural counties to more than \$500,000 in urban counties.

Hamilton County took advantage of both grant programs to fund a geo-exchange mechanical system for its courthouse. "Timing was everything," explained County Judge Randy Mills about the experience integrating the high-efficiency system into the restoration project.

While the THCPP restoration grant funded the bulk of the \$6.5 million construction cost, a \$40,000 federal ARRA allotment helped match



Above: Ground source heat pumps, typically 40 percent more efficient than traditional methods, were installed at the Trinity County Courthouse. Opposite page: Historic windows were repaired and upgraded at the Hamilton County Courthouse.

Green Group

The THC's Sustainability Committee meets monthly to discuss agency-wide initiatives. Over the past two years, the committee has worked on a checklist of workplace issues to improve sustainable efforts through agency purchasing and other practices.

The team recently began analyzing energy use in THC facilities, with the objective of developing ways to disseminate tips to staff, provide training opportunities on sustainable practices, and reduce energy use. The committee also designed a webpage, providing a place to view case studies, resources, and other information on THC facilities and historic sites along with the agency's position statement on sustainability. To learn more, visit www.thc.state.tx.us/historicprop/hpsustain.shtml.



the additional cost of the geo-exchange system installation. Without assistance from both programs, the upgrade would not have been possible.

Although the purchase of new equipment is often the most prominent feature of a restoration, the most important aspects of courthouse sustainability involve low-tech solutions. Many counties focus on maintaining, repairing, or improving the building shell—which includes the roof, walls, windows, and doors—as the first line of defense in energy conservation.

Holes and cracks in the building façade will defeat all efforts to maintain comfortable indoor temperatures and humidity. Restoration projects typically start by replacing mortar in masonry walls, cleaning surfaces, patching holes, and replacing broken elements. Adding weather stripping and caulking joints at openings provides important seals against outdoor air infiltration.

To this end, a number of counties used the ARRA allotments to improve existing window systems in historic courthouses. In addition to wood sash window repair, some counties installed high-quality solar film to reduce direct sunlight and heat, or they added interior storm window panels to reduce heat exchange and air infiltration.

Recently, the THC's Architecture Division has begun developing guidelines for solar film and interior storm windows to enhance energy conservation, while preserving these defining features of historic buildings. Surprisingly, windows account for only 20 percent of energy loss in buildings, as compared to roof surfaces, which are typically responsible for 40 percent of heat exchange.

“Replacing windows made of old-growth wood or hardy steel with windows designed to last only 20 years does not make sense in the long run,” Graves says. “On the other hand, refurbishing existing windows preserves hand-crafted glass and dwindling resources such as longleaf pine.”

Graves adds that with proper maintenance—including repainting, replacing window putty, making repairs, and caulking window openings on a regular basis—these windows should last for generations to come.

As modern suspended ceilings are removed during the restoration process, courthouses fill with light and space, a technique known as daylighting. The transformation of these dark and dingy spaces reminds us of the value of daylight and access to outside views—values also prized by environmentalists. Not only do

natural light and ventilation save energy costs, but their benefits in improving workplace morale cannot be overstated.

Sustainability rating systems, such as the LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Rating System, reinforce many of the same values held by preservationists, particularly in communities centered on courthouse squares. As the focus of development, courthouse restoration bolsters walkable communities and reduces sprawl by preserving sensitive outlying land where new justice centers are often built.

Once the courthouse has been stabilized through restoration, a variety of businesses thrive on surrounding blocks to serve employees and visitors. Community connectivity is strengthened as the ripple effect improves commerce, safety, and overall attraction to residents and visitors.

“By measuring the combined effect of state and local funding, our courthouse program has pumped more than \$325 million into Texas downtowns, while revitalizing buildings that would otherwise be destined for the landfill,” Graves says. ★

This article was written by Bess Althaus Graham of the THC's Architecture Division.

Brownsville: A Winning Combination of Preservation and Tourism

This Place Matters! Travel Matters! Most Texas preservationists and travel industry professionals recognize these phrases, and they likely have participated in the associated campaigns from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and National Travel and Tourism Week. These initiatives raise awareness about the importance of preservation and tourism to local economies and community character.

In Brownsville, the benefits of using preservation and tourism as an economic generator have merged into an award-winning combination for residents and visitors in this vibrant South Texas city. This distinctive blend prompted the Texas Historical Commission (THC), in partnership with the Office of the First Lady, to recognize Brownsville with the 2011 First Lady's Texas Treasures Award.

This award, now in its third year, honors Texas communities demonstrating a high level of creativity and ingenuity in identifying and preserving their authentic "sense of place."

Awarded communities collaborate locally with preservation, historical, and cultural organizations as well as city and county offices. This collaboration is manifested in wide-ranging participation in THC programs, while continually

educating residents and strengthening the community's preservation ethic.

The preservation accomplishments in Brownsville are multi-faceted, from the iconic 1912 Cameron County Courthouse to significant military sites to diverse historic neighborhoods and cemeteries. In particular, the 2007 courthouse restoration through the THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program reaffirms the building's emotional significance for Brownsville residents.

"I want to thank the First Lady for sponsoring this truly deserved award," said Sen. Eddie Lucio of Brownsville. "The courthouse has a special place in my heart. I first worked there as a 24-year-old. What I saw then and see now is a beautiful building. It had been deteriorating, but thanks to the work of former county judges, numerous civic organizations, and the Texas Historical Commission, it has been restored."

Another local preservation success story is the renovation of the 1937 George Kraigher House, designed by internationally renowned architect Richard Neutra. Included on both Preservation Texas' and America's Most Endangered Historic Places in 2004, the city worked with the University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College (UTB/TSC) to save this modern jewel, allowing students enrolled in the historic building restoration program to receive hands-on preservation experience. Through this program, student craftsmen have assisted with the rehabilitation of nearly a dozen historic community and campus properties.

In 2010, Brownsville's Old City Cemetery and Hebrew Cemetery were listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a result of extensive

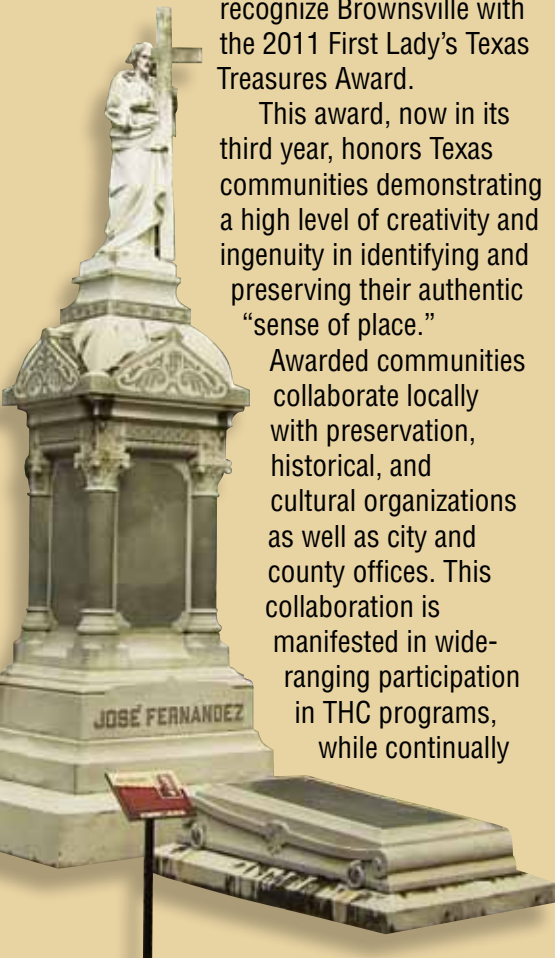
volunteer research. The cemeteries are sources of great community pride and serve as vital links to the strength and determination of Brownsville's early residents. In addition, Old City Cemetery's grounds and monuments, designated a Historic Texas Cemetery through the THC's Cemetery Preservation Program, are maintained through participation in the THC's RIP Guardian program.

Preservation Draws Heritage Tourists

As a result of collective dedication and vision, preservation is palpable in Brownsville, which was designated a Preserve America community in 2009. Creative local champions have leveraged long-term preservation practices into an organized and well-facilitated heritage tourism infrastructure.

The Brownsville Historical Association, in particular, has contributed 63 years of leadership in helping preserve Brownsville's important historic settings. The group, along with the City of Brownsville and the Brownsville Community Improvement Corporation, partnered to receive a \$132,870 federal Preserve America grant in 2007 to develop a GIS-based interactive web application and place street-scene photo murals, informational kiosks, and bilingual signage at historically significant resources. Self-guided walking and driving tour brochures are available for six areas of town, and visitors can rent an MP3 player for guided audio tours of the cemetery, courthouse, Fort Brown, and other notable sites.

With funding from a 2010 THC Heritage Tourism Partnership Grant, UTB/TSC will debut a permanent





Opposite page: Brownsville's Old City Cemetery greatly benefits from volunteers. Above: The 1928 Southern Pacific Railroad Depot is among Brownsville's most-visited heritage attractions. (Both photos courtesy Curtis Craven). At left: State, city, and THC officials attended the recent ceremony for Brownsville's First Lady's Texas Treasures Award.

Fort Brown photo exhibit and iPod walking tour in May. These attractions will highlight the vitality of an active university campus with the preservation of fort structures, earthworks, and the fort's role in the 1846 Mexican-American War, Civil War, and both World Wars.

With imagination, companions, and perhaps one of the four maps available from the Convention and Visitors Bureau, Brownsville visitors should prepare to be vicariously transported to dramatic moments in Texas history. Meet the culturally and ethnically diverse characters from early city settlement and the cattle-drive era, or witness the ravages of yellow-fever epidemics in the historic City Cemetery. Stroll and compare historic photo murals to the vibrant sights and sounds of contemporary downtown street scenes. Listen for the Rio Grande paddleboats shipping Confederate cotton or bringing fine

furnishings from New Orleans while overlooking Texas' last relic Sabal palm forest.

These are a few of the dynamic educational experiences awaiting in Brownsville. Why is all of this possible? Because, as Brownsville's Historic Downtown District Director Peter Goodman says, "Nobody should be condemned to grow up in a city without a past. The lives of our children will be enhanced if our historic structures are utilized and made available to the public."

These words reflect the significant value Brownsville places on combining preservation with public engagement. To hear more from Brownsville preservationists and see additional heritage sites, view the First Lady's Texas Treasures Award video at www.thc.state.tx.us (available May 10).★

This article was written by April Garner of the THC's Community Heritage Development Division.

Celebrate Preservation Month in May

Spend a day in May celebrating Preservation Month and Texas Travel and Tourism Week with heritage events in First Lady's Texas Treasures Award communities. For details about these activities and more, visit www.thc.state.tx.us.

Castroville • May 6

Fiorella Friday with heritage food, artisans, and regional entertainment on historic Fiorella Street

Georgetown • May 6

Celebration of the Arts and tours of the historic downtown square and courthouse every Saturday and Sunday

Mount Vernon • May 21

Piney Woods Wine Festival and "Silhouette Pictures and Antique Cash Registers" exhibit at the Firestation Museum

Nacogdoches • Fridays in May

lunch and music in downtown square • May 7—historic building loft tours

San Marcos • May 7 and 8

Craftsman Homes Tour, Heritage Association of San Marcos • May 21—Texas Natural & Western Swing Festival, courthouse square

Waxahachie • May 7

Cinco de Mayo Fiesta with music, food, and crafts • May 27–June 5 Plein Air Paint-Out featuring artists in the downtown square

Rally in Brownsville

To experience Brownsville's appeal, visit the city on U.S. Travel and Tourism Week Rally Day (May 10). Events include the official premiere of the THC's First Lady's Texas Treasures Award video, free Rally Day tours (guided walks through historic districts, museums, cemeteries, and military sites), and a radio tour launch at Palmito Ranch Battlefield. Visit www.thc.state.tx.us/heritagetourism/htFLTTA.shtml for a detailed itinerary.

Marshall: All Aboard!

Railroad, African American Legacies Are Hubs of Northeast Texas City's Heritage

The railroad brought prosperity and growth to many Texas towns, but it delivered a different brand of cargo to Marshall. Beyond the usual goods and services that nurtured a developing community, the railroad's presence in Marshall played a role in a distinctively educated population and a lasting cultural legacy.

Marshall's geographic location in far northeast Texas provided a strategic connection to the region's active steamboat traffic and emerging railroad lines from points east. As early as 1858, steamboat passengers arriving at Swanson's Landing on the southern shores of nearby Caddo Lake could catch a passenger train on the

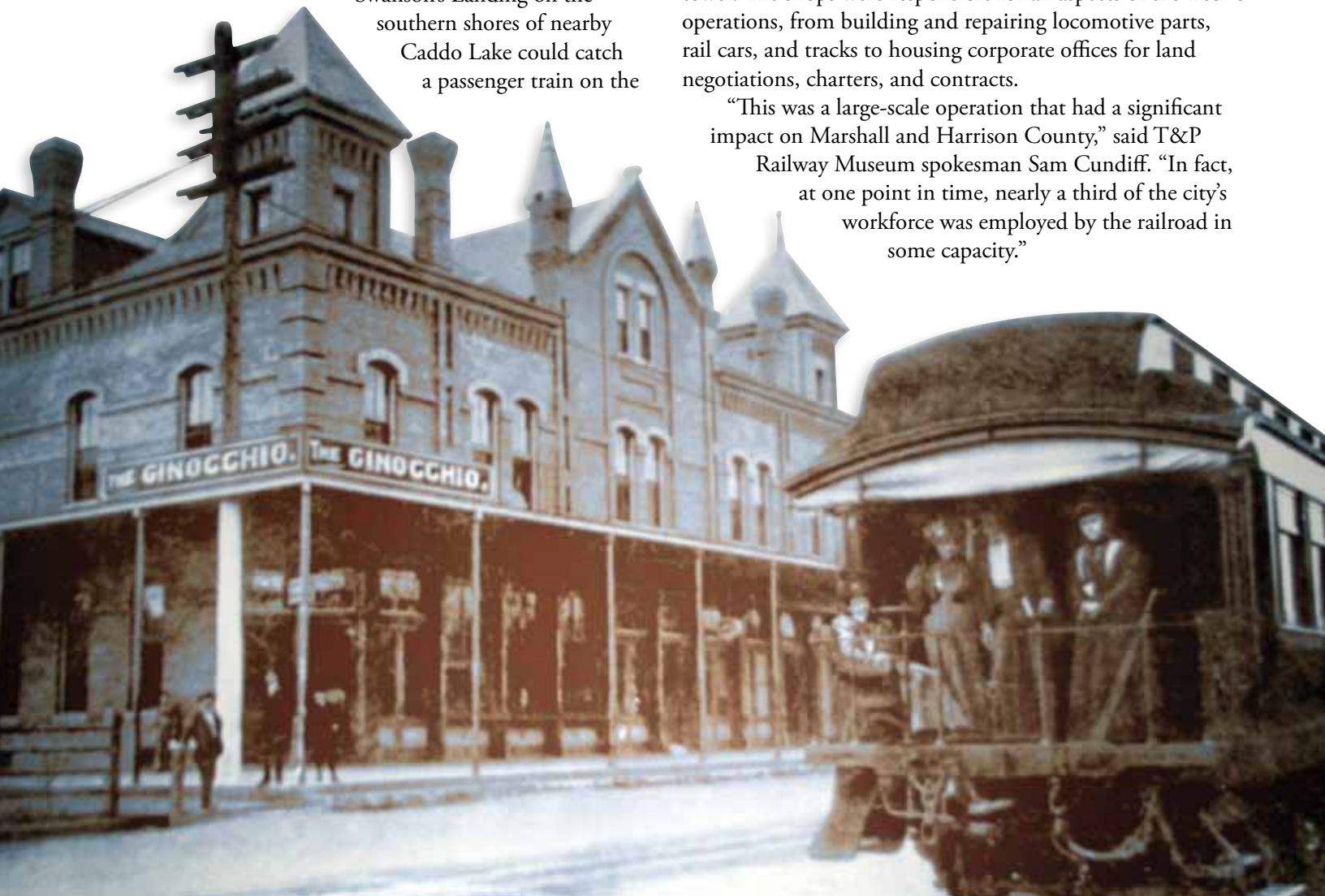
Southern Pacific Railroad and ride to Marshall.

The railroad brought money, settlers, and supplies to Marshall, making it one of the largest and wealthiest towns in East Texas, according to the *Handbook of Texas Online*. By the 1870s, the community boasted an impressive group of lawyers, political leaders, and educators, earning it the nickname "The Athens of Texas."

This growth and prosperity prompted Harrison County officials to boldly bolster the city's profile by offering the Texas and Pacific Railway (T&P) a \$300,000 bond subsidy in 1871 to locate its manufacturing shops and administrative offices in Marshall. T&P President Jay Gould accepted the offer, and the town received an immediate population and financial boost from the influx of railroad workers.

The T&P's extensive operations became known as the Marshall shops, a 66-acre complex comprised of 57 buildings including a roundhouse, car shops, warehouse, and water tower. The shops were responsible for all aspects of the T&P's operations, from building and repairing locomotive parts, rail cars, and tracks to housing corporate offices for land negotiations, charters, and contracts.

"This was a large-scale operation that had a significant impact on Marshall and Harrison County," said T&P Railway Museum spokesman Sam Cundiff. "In fact, at one point in time, nearly a third of the city's workforce was employed by the railroad in some capacity."





Among these employees were African American freedmen, many of whom congregated in the railroad's barrelhouses (warehouse facilities traditionally associated with logging camps). Other African Americans in Marshall were drawn to educational opportunities, particularly at Wiley College and, later, Bishop College. Founded in 1873, Wiley College became the first African American college west of the Mississippi River certified by the Freedman's Aid Society. It began offering college-level classes in 1885, and has remained a community cornerstone ever since.

Wiley College flourished as a result of the large number of freedmen in Harrison County after Emancipation. Prior to the Civil War, the county had the most slaves in the state. According to the *Handbook of Texas Online*, "The census of 1860 enumerated 8,784 slaves (59 percent of the total population), 145 planters who owned at least 20 bondsmen, and a cotton crop of 21,440 bales." Coupled with the burgeoning railroad industry and its need for cheap, manual labor, booming Marshall was a hub for African Americans seeking employment and improved lives.

Many freed slaves and their families created opportunities for themselves through education. An early advocate for learning was Meshack Roberts, a freed slave who served in the state legislature from 1873–78, until he was forced from office by the rise of the white Citizens Party of Harrison County. Though illiterate, one of Roberts' main goals was to educate African Americans throughout Texas, and he helped in the founding of Wiley College.

Another prominent champion of education in Marshall was Matthew Winfred Dogan, president of Wiley College from 1896–1942. During his tenure, the school expanded and rose to national prominence. He was responsible for obtaining the Carnegie Foundation grant to build the public Carnegie Library in 1907.

It was also during this time that one of the great accomplishments in African American history occurred.

Opposite page: The Texas and Pacific Railway transformed Marshall in the 1870s (photo: Marshall Depot, Inc.). Clockwise, from above: This significant heritage is documented at the city's railroad museum; A former Carnegie Library is now an administration building at Wiley College; The restored courtroom of the 1901 Harrison County Courthouse.

In 1935, the Wiley College debate team defeated all-white reigning national champions, the University of Southern California. This unprecedented feat was the basis for the fictionalized account in the 2007 film "The Great Debaters." The team was led by Melvin Tolson, a well-known civil rights activist, poet, dramatist, and English professor at Wiley College from 1924–47.

One debate team member who was mentored by Tolson rose to national prominence during the civil rights movement: James Farmer, Jr. co-founded the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in 1942. As the national organization's chairman, he was a leader in the nonviolent civil disobedience movement of the 1960s and organizer of the Freedom Rides in the South. In 1998, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Honor by President Bill Clinton. One of Farmer's early motivations for founding CORE was Marshall's segregated Paramount Theater, with its offending side entrance for African Americans leading to the balcony.

While the civil rights movement shook the entire country, Marshall was an epicenter in Texas. In 1960, lunch counter sit-ins at the segregated Woolworth's and Fry Hodge Drug Store were some of the largest in the state. The nonviolent protests were led by students from local African American colleges (Wiley and Bishop)—the latter founded in 1881 by the Baptist Home Mission Society. The sit-ins were only partially successful following arrests and court cases. Rather than integrate, the downtown lunch counters closed and remained so until the 1990s.

That limited victory is representative of the challenging African American history in Marshall, where slavery, Jim

Crow laws, and the fight for civil rights are recent enough that many in the city still deal with their difficult memories. This struggle is an important consideration for Janet Cook, executive director of the Harrison County Historical Museum, who is setting up the permanent exhibits to be housed in the newly restored Harrison County Courthouse.

When the museum reopens later this year, the exhibits will follow a timeline of events, with African American history dates intertwined rather than set apart. Cook says there was discussion about a separate African American exhibit, but she acknowledges, "It's a part of everyone's history in Harrison County."

"Slavery is a difficult and sensitive subject to deal with," Cook adds. "It's a very dark period in our history, but it's something we can't just ignore. It's especially important in Harrison County because after slavery, things like Wiley College and music helped bring us to the place we are today."

Music, in particular, has become a focal point for Marshall's current cultural heritage, especially its role in the development of the boogie woogie genre (see sidebar on page 13). This barrelhouse-style piano music is honored in the city's official campaign titled Marshall, Texas: The Birthplace of Boogie Woogie. A palpable energy surrounds this recent heritage discovery, and its resultant concerts bring together people of all ethnicities and ages.

"I grew up in Marshall, and I'd always heard about the thriving African American music scene that was here until Prohibition," recalls Jack Canson, co-director of Marshall, Texas: The Birthplace of Boogie Woogie. "There hasn't been much news about it since then, but we're hoping to bring it back."

Canson is grateful of the surviving legacy, saying, "If there wasn't so much rich African American heritage around here, I'm not sure we'd even be able to pull off this boogie woogie thing."

Marshall Matters

For heritage travelers, the best way to get immersed in Marshall's rich African American legacy is through an educational driving tour, guided by the informative *Buard History Trail* brochure. The brochure offers a comprehensive timeline, detailed maps, historic photos, and insightful background about more than 30 sites related to the history of African Americans in Marshall. Corresponding markers are installed at most of these locations, which include Wiley College, the site of Bishop College, the Paramount Theater, and the Old Powder Mill Cemetery. Free copies of the *Buard History Trail* with an accompanying audio CD are available from the Marshall Convention and



Visitors Bureau (213 W. Austin St. or call 903.935.7868).

Regardless of your area of historical interest, the best place to start a heritage-themed journey in Marshall is the stately **Harrison County Courthouse** (Houston Street and North Washington Avenue, 903.935.8417). Serving as the town's visual and visceral centerpiece, the courthouse was restored in 2009 through the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.

The Neo-Classical Beaux Arts style building was constructed in 1901 of corn yellow brick and carved Lueders limestone, with remarkable architectural elements such as colossal pink granite columns adorned with terra cotta capitals, eagles along the edge of the roof line, Lady Justice atop a beautifully restored cupola, and recreated and restored ornamental finishes throughout the building.

Although the Harrison County Historical Museum is currently being installed in several wings of the courthouse, visitors are still encouraged to explore the building to experience its rich history and hand-crafted detailing. As museum director Cook notes, "The structure itself is our county's greatest artifact."

Similarly significant is the **Texas and Pacific Railway Museum and Depot** (800 N. Washington Ave., 903.938.8248, www.marshalldepot.org). All that remains of the once-vast T&P Railway yards is the historic 1912





depot; however, this prominent red-brick building aptly represents the extensive operations that had a significant cultural and developmental impact on Marshall. To get to the museum, visitors must pass through a tunnel below the still-active Amtrak line and enter the depot, where an impressive collection of railroad artifacts awaits. Items include memorabilia from early passenger trains, exhibits detailing the large-scale manufacturing functions at the shops, and hands-on displays including a model train and pull whistle.

Just south of the depot is Marshall's downtown commercial district, containing a diverse mix of shops, restaurants, and businesses in restored historic buildings that have benefitted from participation in the THC's Texas Main Street Program. Among the most-visited sites is the **1898 Weisman Building** (211 North Washington Ave., 903.934.8836), which operated for more than a century as a department store until closing in 1989. After an extensive rehabilitation, the Weisman Center now houses a café and a collection of merchants offering antiques, pottery, art, and furniture.



While downtown, consider visiting another popular cultural attraction—the **Michelson Museum of Art** (216 North Bolivar St., 903.935.9480, www.michelsonmuseum.org), featuring a colorful collection of paintings and drawings by Russian-American artist Leo Michelson (1887–1978). Since opening in 1985, the museum has expanded its collection to include early 20th-century American art and international objects such as African masks and Chinese opera puppets.

A few miles from downtown is the historic campus of **Wiley**

Clockwise, from top: The 1918 Thirkield Hall sits prominently on Wiley College campus; Powder Mill Cemetery is on the Buard History Trail; The Harrison County Historical Museum will feature cultural exhibits inside the courthouse. On the cover: The 1901 Harrison County Courthouse.

College (711 Wiley Ave., 903.923.2400, www.wileyc.edu). Founded in 1873, the oldest African American college in the western United States remains an important educational institution and boasts several historically significant structures. Among them are the distinguished former Carnegie Library now housing the Willis J. King Administration Building, the 1905 President's Home, and the 1918 Thirkield Hall. An Official Texas Historical Marker near the President's Home chronicles the real stories of Wiley College's notable history.

For additional information about heritage tourism destinations in Marshall and East Texas, order a free copy of the THC's *Texas Forest Trail Region* travel guide by calling 866.276.6219 or visiting www.thc.state.tx.us/travel. Regional attractions are also featured in the THC's free travel booklet *African Americans in Texas: A Lasting Legacy*, available via the same phone number or www.africanamericansintexas.com. ★

This article was written by Rob Hodges and Andy Rhodes of the THC's Marketing Communications Division. Photos by Andy Rhodes.

May/June 2011

Making the Starr Family Home Shine

The Starr Family Home, one of the THC's 20 historic sites, is among Marshall's most-visited heritage tourism attractions. However, the stately 1871 Victorian home, Maplecroft, is currently closed for much-needed preservation work, including minor structural repair, addition of central air conditioning, carpentry repairs, and exterior repainting. The site will reopen by December 1, 2011.

While work is proceeding at Maplecroft, site staff is repairing and repainting the remaining structures on the 3.2-acre site that have hosted four generations of Starr family history.

"It's a lot of work to paint all these buildings and carefully handle all the artifacts—especially the Maplecroft mansion," says MaryLin Hocutt, the site's office manager. "People in Marshall keep calling to see if we're open because we host so many events throughout the year. I tell them it'll be awhile, but it will definitely be worth it when everything's completed."

In the meantime, Hocutt notes that site staff is available to provide off-site programs to school groups and community organizations. For more information, contact the site at 903.935.3044 or email starr-family-home@thc.state.tx.us.

The Starr Family Home's Blake House is receiving a fresh coat of paint.



The Boogie Woogie Man

Omar Sharriff Brings Musical Legacy Back Home

David Alexander Elam's momma didn't want the devil's music in her house. But when she wasn't there, Elam's father would raise a little hell with his friends, some instruments, and plenty of corn liquor. As a young boy in Marshall, Elam was mesmerized by the music they played, which didn't seem to be the work of the devil at all. It was inspirational. And it stuck with him.

"My dad threw some wild parties, man—he and his friends would create their own fun," says Elam, who now goes by the name Omar Sharriff. "They'd play boogie woogie and old blues music like Robert Johnson and Muddy Waters. I'd go to school the next day and try to play it on the piano."

Decades later, Sharriff would share the stage with Waters himself, among other legendary musicians

like Ray Charles, Albert Collins, and Buddy Guy. He toured in Europe and earned a living as a respected pianist in California before an unexpected invitation in 2010 brought him back home to East Texas, where he now serves as Marshall's cultural ambassador.

"When I first heard about Marshall wanting me to come back, I thought it was a joke," he says. Instead, Sharriff found a welcoming community that has benefitted from a newfound musical legacy and decades of racial tolerance.

Life was considerably different for Sharriff while growing up in Marshall. Born in 1938, he brawled with white kids in the street, attended a segregated school, and entered buildings through a separate doorway. His home life was relatively stable thanks to his father, who worked for a logging company as a mule skinner (the man who handled a mule team), and his church-minded mother, who he describes as Christ-like.

Sharriff recalls his elementary school music teacher Ella Mae Willis providing his first piano lesson, which was inspiring yet frustrating, since he was unable to practice without a piano in his home. "When I wanted to play, I'd have to climb

into an open window at the school and play the piano in there," he says.

As a student at Pemberton High School, Sharriff attended a show by nationally renowned piano player Floyd Dixon, a Marshall native. He refers to the concert as a significant turning point in his life. "I decided right then and there—That's it, I want to do that," he says. Dixon helped Sharriff get started in the music business by suggesting influential albums by Art Tatum and Thelonious Monk and introducing him to club owners in nearby Shreveport, Texarkana, and Tyler.

By 1955, however, racism had become an inescapable threat. After witnessing a black man get beaten in downtown Marshall while policemen sat by idly smoking cigarettes, he and his family fled to California. Sharriff served in the Navy for two years and moved to Oakland, where he began his journey as a professional musician.

Sharriff recalls a seminal experience while playing a gig at San Francisco's Minny's Can-Do Club, where a bar patron was observing him with keen interest. After the show, he approached Sharriff, expressed his admiration, and asked him to call if he wanted to play at the city's highest-profile venues. Though suspicious of the man's intentions, Sharriff ultimately made contact and was humbled to discover he was speaking with famous concert promoter Bill Graham.

"He booked me as an opener for Bob Dylan and got me into the Winterland ballroom—that was the greatest thing that ever happened to me." Sharriff says. "San Francisco was great, man. That city was like a beautiful woman—I just loved that whole scene."

Omar Sharriff plays boogie woogie piano music in his hometown of Marshall, where he recently returned to be the city's cultural ambassador.



Omar Sharriff (at left) and Muddy Waters shared the stage and an enduring friendship in the early 1970s.

For most of the 1960s and '70s, Sharriff toured regularly along the West Coast, and, most memorably across Europe where he was mobbed by autograph-seeking fans who “made (him) feel like the president of the United States.” He also released several albums during this time under

Sacramento, though the proliferation of club DJs and a decline in appreciation for blues-based piano left him disillusioned.

When Sharriff received a phone call from Texas musicologist John Tennison in January 2010, he was struggling to make ends meet.

his given name (Dave Alexander) before converting to Islam, when he took the name Omar Sharriff. By the 1980s and '90s, he was playing primarily in the San Francisco Bay area and eventually in

Tennison convinced Sharriff his intentions were legitimate, and Sharriff was welcomed home on June 10, 2010 for a celebratory concert as part of Omar Sharriff Day. In February 2011, he permanently moved back to Marshall, where he receives a small stipend and an apartment from the city while serving as an artist in residence.

“I don’t have to worry about any of the bad stuff here anymore—time has taken care of it. God bless time,” Sharriff says. “Everybody’s been so nice to me. I wouldn’t have believed it if someone told me in 1955 that one day there’d be an Omar Sharriff Day in Marshall. It’s a different world, man.”★

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

Tracking Marshall’s Musical Origins

So, just how did Marshall become known as the birthplace of boogie woogie? It all started with Texarkana native John Tennison, a San Antonio psychiatrist and boogie woogie expert who extensively researched the genre’s beginnings and arrived at what he refers to as “the most probable conclusion” of Marshall being its city of origin.

A compelling convergence of forces in Marshall—primarily involving the state’s largest population of freedmen and the headquarters of the Texas and Pacific Railway—led Tennison to theorize boogie woogie likely originated in the barrelhouses associated with the logging camps on the railroad line. The steady rhythm of the steam wheels (the repetitive sound of four chuffs per turn that translates to an eight-to-the-bar meter) created an ostinato tempo that was simulated with the left-handed bass part of boogie woogie piano music.

“We imitate our environment, so when something gets in our head with a pattern like that, we tend to replicate it in a physical manifestation—in this case, the piano,” Tennison says.

He adds that his “meta-analysis” is based on reconcilable sources, including oral histories, interviews, and documentation by music historians he is compiling for a book. His thorough research has impressed many entities, resulting in official proclamations and promotion by Texas’ State Historian Light Cummins, the City of Marshall, and National Public Radio.

Jack and Nancy Canson, co-directors of the city-sponsored initiative Marshall, Texas, the Birthplace of Boogie Woogie, are enthusiastic about Tennison’s work and have already witnessed its impact on their community.

“People in town are hearing about it, reading about it, and talking about it,” Nancy says. “When you mention Omar Sharriff’s name, they say ‘Oh yeah—the boogie woogie man!’ ”

The Cansons have organized Boogie Woogie Wednesdays—weekly concerts in the historic downtown district—and other performances to help promote Marshall’s newfound cultural legacy (visit www.boogiewoogiemarshall.com for more information). For details about Tennison’s extensive research, visit www.bowof.org.

Legendary Landmark

Castroville Historic Site Hosted Travelers and a Pioneering Mill System

Motorists traveling through Castroville on U.S. Hwy. 90 might catch a glimpse of a cluster of historic structures and wonder what they represent. If they stopped, they would find that the limestone buildings contain compelling stories from centuries past, with connections to early settlers and innovative milling techniques.

The structures comprise the Landmark Inn State Historic Site, one of the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) 20 historic properties. Situated on the west bank of the Medina River, Landmark Inn tells the real stories of the region's early settlers and significant buildings.

The center of the site's activity is the namesake inn. Constructed in 1849 by French-Alsatian immigrant Cesar Monod, the structure was built with a rear-detached kitchen and was originally used as a home and a dry goods store. In 1850, John Vance purchased the building and enlarged it by adding a second story and a two-tiered porch. Vance opened the site to weary travelers on the adjacent San Antonio-El Paso

Road; over time, it became known as Vance Inn.

In 1861, Vance built a house between the inn and the Medina River, which served as his residence until his death in 1899.

Vance also constructed a bathhouse in the courtyard, which provided the only man-made bathing facility between San Antonio and Eagle Pass at the time.

In 1854, Vance sold frontage property along the Medina River to George L. Haass and Laurent Quintle to build a gristmill. To harness the river's water power, Haass and Quintle constructed a 250-foot long, 8-foot high dam. To this day, the original dam spans the Medina River.

At the west end of the dam was a water-flow entry gate, which included a lifting mechanism similar in operation to a car jack. A long metal bar was the "handle," and the gate slid vertically into a slot. When the mill was in operation, the gate would be opened, and water flowed from the dam into the first stage of the site's pioneering mill operation.

"One of the most interesting features of the mill is a 400-foot long

tunnel known as a headrace, which channeled water from the dam to the mill," explains José Zapata, Landmark Inn site manager. "Underground headraces were extremely rare,

especially one this long and dug entirely by hand."

Zapata adds that a 45-foot long bypass tunnel on the east side of the headrace diverted and regulated water flow and also helped remove debris. Water then moved from the headrace into the mill pit, a stone structure that by the early 20th century contained a working steel turbine. The force of the water surging from the headrace into

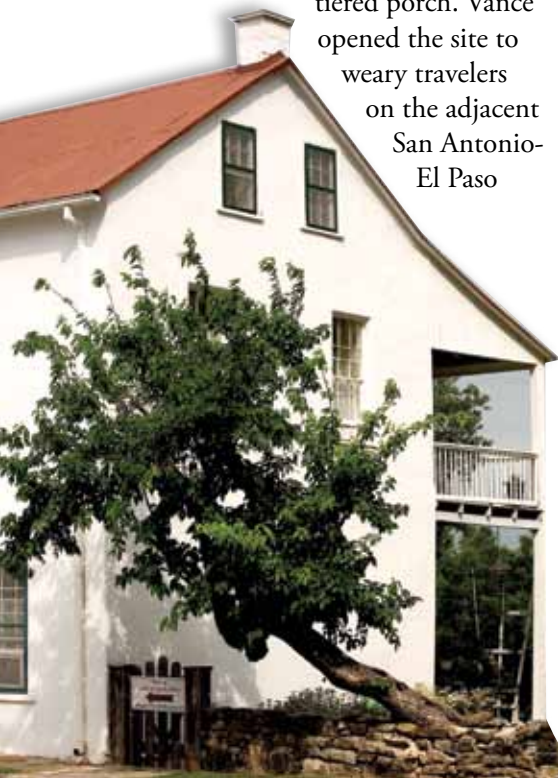
the mill pit turned the turbine, which was connected by a series of belts and pulleys to machinery inside the mill. The water then exited the mill pit and rejoined the the river downstream.

"The entire system used to power the mill was a tremendous engineering feat for its time," Zapata says. "We encourage people to get out of their cars and visit the site to get a first-hand look at the history of this impressive operation." ★

This article was written by Thomas Kroemer of the Landmark Inn staff.



Landmark Inn exhibits showcase the site's former role as an important regional mill.



Landmark Inn State Historic Site

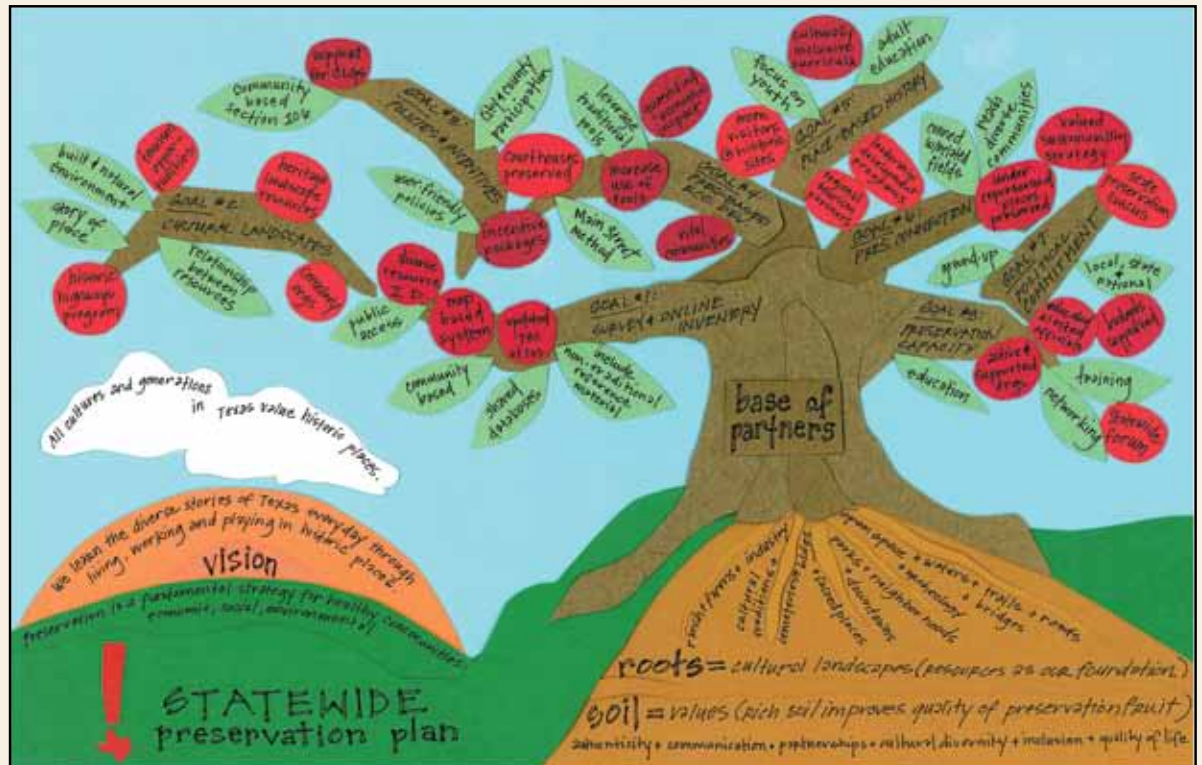
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Open daily, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Preservation Connection: Texas Statewide Historic Preservation Plan

Every 10 years, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) develops a Statewide Historic Preservation Plan. It's a collaborative process and one of our key responsibilities as a State Historic Preservation Office under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. This new plan as an opportunity to lay a pathway, or perhaps blaze a trail, for Texans to preserve, protect, and leverage our historic and cultural fabric for the betterment of our communities statewide.



The THC's goal is for the 2011-2020 Texas Statewide Historic Preservation Plan to be a living, growing tool for preservation across the state. As a way to communicate this message, we created a visual representation, the Preservation Plan Tree, to facilitate understanding and interacting with the plan's main elements.

Developing the Plan

The THC designed a planning process for preservationists across Texas to develop this plan from the ground up. Stakeholders were offered a variety of ways to be involved and stay informed, including:

- An online public preservation survey in early 2010, which drew 1,089 respondents. The results provided a snapshot of local and statewide preservation strengths, issues, challenges, and opportunities.
- More than 100 people contributed to the vision for preservation.
- Nine communities hosted statewide planning forums during summer 2010. More than 250 stakeholders offered feedback on the plan, shared local success stories, and developed community applications.

The Historic and Cultural Fabric of Texas

Texas embraces a vast collection of historic and cultural resources. A quick glance reveals Hispanic ranches, maritime vessels, bungalow neighborhoods, prehistoric Native American rock art, mid-century hotels, slave cemeteries, farmsteads, iron truss bridges, and urban parks. These are just a few examples of the countless real places that tell the real stories of Texas.

Our current statewide historic resources inventory contains written information, photographs, and negatives chronicling more than 225,000 sites in Texas. Among these are:

- 3,000 buildings, districts, archeological sites, structures, and objects listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Of these listings, 350 are historic districts containing more than

30,000 contributing buildings and structures.

- 15,000 Official Texas Historical Markers that interpret and promote history.
- 3,600 Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks.
- 1,400 officially designated Historic Texas Cemeteries.
- 235 historic courthouses that can serve as the focal point of their counties.
- 3,000 State Archeological Landmarks, which apply legal protection in accordance with the Antiquities Code of Texas.

In addition, thousands of historic places are inventoried in the Texas Historic Sites Atlas and at the local level, many of which are designated as community landmarks and historic districts. Countless historic places remain unidentified throughout the state.

Goals

The following eight goals represent the measurable, positive change that we, as a preservation community, want to achieve over the next 10 years. We have provided examples of success stories after each goal that demonstrate how partners across Texas are already accomplishing the plan. Visit our website at www.preservationconnection.com to learn more about these projects and discover additional outcomes, case studies, and local applications.

Goal 1: Survey and Online Inventory

Texans undertake a comprehensive survey of the state's diverse historic and cultural resources resulting in a publicly accessible online inventory.

■ The Austin Historical Web Survey is a collaboration between the University of Texas at Austin and the City of Austin to develop an online interactive tool for volunteer-driven historic resource surveys. It brings together citizens' local knowledge with the expertise of preservation professionals to improve historic survey information.

Goal 2: Emphasize Cultural Landscapes

Preservation practices are enhanced by emphasizing cultural landscapes.

■ The San Antonio Conservation Society has spearheaded a survey and educational campaign for historic farms and ranches in Bexar County. Members have documented more than 80 sites and are working with property owners and preservation groups to protect the historic rural character of South Texas and the Hill Country.

Goal 3: Implement Policies and Incentives

Cities, counties, and the state implement preservation policies and incentives to effectively manage historic assets.

■ The City of El Paso adopted a vacant buildings ordinance to

Connect to the Plan Today!

Visit www.preservationconnection.com and help shape the future of preservation in Texas. Here are some easy ways to be a partner on this journey:

- Cut out this summary for easy reference. Make copies for members of your organization, family, friends, and colleagues.
- Visit the plan online at www.preservationconnection.com and join the preservation network.
- Share your local success stories that connect to this online plan. These case studies will help build the plan into a dynamic information tool.
- Use the vision and goals of this plan as a framework for your own local preservation planning, and customize strategies for your community or organization.

proactively address neglect in its built environment, much of which is historic. The ordinance encourages rehabilitation and requires property owners to register vacant buildings with the city and keep them well maintained.

Goal 4: Leverage Economic Development Tools

Communities leverage preservation-based and traditional economic development tools to revitalize historic areas.

■ The Brewster County Historical Commission, with local partnerships, has used county hotel/motel tax revenue to research, design, and fabricate interpretive signage promoting the story of the county's heritage, culture, and natural attractions.

Goal 5: Learn and Experience History through Place

Texas residents and guests learn and experience the state's diverse history through formal education, recreation, and everyday interactions with historic places.

■ Brownsville-21, a Preserve America-funded project of the Brownsville Historical Association, includes multi-media materials, bilingual walking and driving tours, information kiosks, and photomurals for historic locations throughout the city.

Goal 6: Connect Preservation to Related Fields

Preservation is connected and integrated into related fields and activities, building a broader, stronger, and more diverse community.

■ Galveston Historical Foundation's Green Revival uses a 19th-century historic home as a model to demonstrate the connection between green and sustainable building practices and historic preservation.

Goal 7: Cultivate Political Commitment

Political commitment is cultivated for historic preservation.

■ Tom Green County Historical Commission has developed ongoing positive relationships with its elected officials through consistent communication, engagement in local projects, and connecting with their personal interest in local history.

Goal 8: Build Capacity of the Preservation Community

The existing preservation community develops its capacity to function more effectively and efficiently.

■ Preservation Texas hosts a Preservation Summit every two years as a forum to identify issues related to the preservation of the historic built environment, develop strategic approaches and solutions to the issues, and cultivate partnerships across the state. ★

Hearne Celebrates Depot Restoration

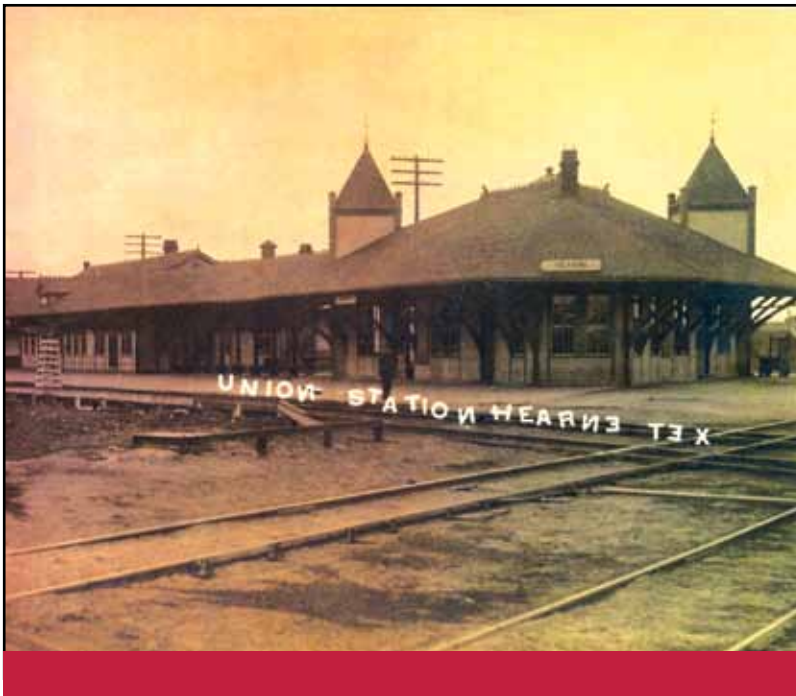
On April 9, residents of Hearne, a Preserve America community in Central Texas, celebrated the grand reopening of its historic train depot. Built in 1901 and restored under a Texas Department of Transportation-administered TEA-21 grant, the venerable structure serviced passengers at the intersection of the International & Great Northern and Houston & Texas Central Railroads, then the Missouri Pacific and Southern Pacific Railroads. The restored depot, moved to its current location in 2001, is now filled with railroad artifacts and memorabilia, Robertson County historical exhibits, and antiques from local retail stores.

For more information, visit www.hearnetexas.info or call 979.279.2351.

National Trust Names San Angelo a Distinctive Destination

The National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) named the West Texas community of San Angelo as one of its Dozen Distinctive Destinations for 2011. The city was selected for its diverse heritage connections, well-preserved and vibrant downtown, and “truly unique cultural offerings.”

In its Distinctive Destinations summary, the NTHP offers the following description of the city: “From its historic murals to celebrated staged gun fights, San Angelo quite literally brings history alive for visitors. At historic Fort Concho, established in 1867, you can step back in time with modern-day reenactors who



The 1901 railroad depot in Hearne, a Preserve America community, was recently restored (with correct lettering). A reopening celebration was held on April 9.

show you how the soldiers who protected America’s frontier settlements, patrolled the region, and quelled hostile threats in the area, lived.”

The National Trust has annually selected communities across America for 11 years that offer cultural and recreational experiences different from those found at the typical vacation destination. For more information about the program and the National Trust, visit www.preservationnation.org.

Historic Sites Free Day to Be Held May 15

The THC is hosting its annual Historic Sites Free Day on Sunday, May 15 at most of its 20 historic properties (several are currently undergoing extensive rehabilitation projects). The sites offer visitors the opportunity to experience Texas’ real stories at military strongholds, house museums, and Native American settlements. For a complete list of properties participating in Historic Sites Free Day, call 512.463.7948 or visit www.texashistoricsites.com.

THC Cemetery Program Recognized by White House

The Texas Historical Commission’s (THC) RIP (Record, Investigate, Protect) Guardian program was recently recognized by First Lady Michelle Obama as a Preserve America Steward. This designation features programs that have demonstrated a successful use of volunteer time and commitment to help care for the nation’s historic heritage. The RIP Guardian program was one of only 21 groups throughout the country to receive this

national acknowledgment.

The RIP Guardian statewide network of cemetery preservation volunteers is dedicated to protecting historic burial grounds in Texas. There are currently 73 RIP Guardian groups throughout the state. The first step toward becoming a RIP Guardian is to obtain the Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designation, which addresses the problem of cemetery destruction by recording as many graveyards as possible.

The program has enabled the official designation of more than 1,500 historic cemeteries in 254 counties. Together the HTC designation and RIP Guardian network help preserve and promote the real stories of Texas as part of the Cemetery Preservation Program offered by the THC.

To learn more about the RIP Guardians and the HTC designation, contact the THC’s History Programs Division at 512.463.5853. For more information on the Preserve America Stewards program, visit www.preserveamerica.gov. ★

National Register News

The National Register of Historic Places is the country's official list of cultural resources deemed worthy of preservation, including more than 3,000 listings in Texas. The following recently listed historic properties represent the real stories reflecting Texas' cultural heritage.



Photo by Elizabeth Butman

Park Road 4 Historic District— Burnet, Burnet County

Park Road 4 serves as the entry to Longhorn Cavern State Park, and was designed by the National Park Service (NPS) and Texas State Park Board as a scenic park road, with native landscaping, native stone, and scenic views. The state park, which is included in the district, was one of the first Texas parks to be constructed under the federal relief programs of the New Deal, and is an exceptional example of design and execution in its time. Most of the construction of the park and park road, which took place

from the early 1930s through the 1940s, was accomplished by the Civilian Conservation Corps, with some work by the Works Progress Administration. The district, encompassing the road and park, is a distinctive example of NPS' state park development in Texas, and of Civilian Conservation Corps construction in Texas.

Blessing Masonic Lodge

No. 411—Blessing, Matagorda County

Blessing Masonic Lodge has been in continuous use as a Masonic meeting hall since its construction in the community of Deming's Bridge, circa 1875. It was moved several miles to its current location in the town of Blessing in 1907. An excellent example of a late 19th-century vernacular civic building, the lodge was listed in the National Register in the area of Social History, for its important role in the history of the local Masonic chapter, founded in 1874. The two-story wood-framed building features the traditional Masonic symbol of the "Square, Compasses, and Letter G" on its clipped gable. Both floors have largely open plans, with the upper floor used for private lodge meetings, and the lower floor used as a cafeteria and general gathering place.



Photo by Kristen Brown

Other recent National register listings include Matagorda County's **Holman House** (Bay City) and Travis County's **Norwood Tower** (Austin).



County Historical Commission TIPS & TOOLS

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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.



Former Cameron CHC Chair Lawrence Lof (left) with his crew in front of the Kraigher House.

The recipient of the First Lady's Texas Treasures Award has traditionally fostered strong ties with its local County Historical Commission (CHC). This year's winner, the City of Brownsville (see article on page 6), is no exception.

The Cameron CHC has received the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Distinguished Service Award for the last eight years and, along with local preservation partners, has invested time and money to save the real places that make the area unique. These projects use national preservation standards for rehabilitation (repairing historic material rather than replacing, using construction details specific to the resource, etc.) to revitalize the historic fabric of Cameron County.

An impressive aspect of this preservation partnership is the resulting technical education. One successful local initiative, the Historic Rehabilitation Program, promotes preservation and restoration construction training as part of

the curriculum at the University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College.

The program, which connects university students to the community through practice and service, is a result of the experience of former Cameron CHC Chair Lawrence Lof, now the director of the Historic Rehabilitation Program. Students enrolled in this program receive hands-on experience in construction and in historic preservation.

Students make a substantial contribution to their community while learning skills that in many areas are unavailable. Additionally, they work on the county's significant cultural and historic resources, including the Alonso Complex, the Cueto Building, and the Fort Brown Cavalry Building and Commander's House. Most notably, students worked on the Kraigher House, built in 1937 by famous Vienna architect Richard Neutra, known for introducing the International Style to American architecture. ★



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Want a clue? Erected in 1914 for a German singing society, this structure hosted concerts and festivals in this Texas Independence Trail community.

Answer to the photo from the last issue: The Texan Theater is in downtown Kilgore. It opened in 1942 and served as a movie house, catfish restaurant, and storage facility before

its recent rehabilitation to a performance venue.

Congratulations to the first three readers who submitted the correct answer: Gerald Bratz of Longview, Liz Hedges of Carthage, and Cyndi Walker of Henderson. They will receive prizes from our Texas Heritage Trails Program, the THC's regional tourism initiative, as a token of our appreciation for taking part in the fun. Thanks to all participants! ★

