

THE MEDALLION



Sabine Pass,
Port Arthur

GULF FORCE

Heritage Sites Emerging
from Hurricane Damage

WITH THE DOWLING VERES

IN MEMORY OF
LT. RICHARD W. DOWLING
AND HIS MEN

TEXAS REMEMBERS THE
FAITHFULNESS AND VALOR
OF HER SONS
AND COMMENDS THEIR
HEROIC EXAMPLE

TIM HERLEY WILLIAM L. JEFF
PAT MALONE ALEX M. CARR
PAT McDONNELL TIM McDONOUGH
JOHN MCGRATH JOHN M. KELLY
MICHAEL McKERNAN DAN McMURRY
JIM McNEALS MICHAEL MONROHAN
PETER O'HARA LAWRENCE PLUNKETT
MAURICE POWERS EDW. PRITCHARD
CHARLES RHEINS MICHAEL SULLIVAN
PAT SULLIVAN THOMAS SULLIVAN
PAT WALSH JOHN T. WERTLEY

Monumental Change

Marker Commemorates Houston's First Sit-In, Dismantling of Segregation

Each year, journalism professor Dr. Serbino Sandifer-Walker takes her students across Texas Southern University's (TSU) campus to the site where segregation in Houston began to crumble. A flagpole was designated as the gathering place for 13 African American students who, on March 4, 1960, marched to Weingarten's Supermarket lunch counter, where they sat quietly in protest while being refused service.

Holly Hogrobrooks was one of the students who participated in the event now referred to as Houston's first sit-in, the subject of the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) newest Undertold Stories historical marker. She recalls the group slowly gathering numbers and momentum as they marched down Wheeler Street during the 45-minute trek to Weingarten's.

"By the time we got there, we had a full group for a demonstration — we filled all those counter stools," Hogrobrooks said. "There wasn't too much tension in the air, but policemen were there, and some scruffy-looking white boys were standing around. Years later, I realized they probably didn't have positive intentions running through their heads."

Hogrobrooks added that the sit-in ended without incident, and the students regrouped the following day to plan similar events at the lunch counters of nearby drugstores Mading's, Walgreens and Woolworth's. The group, which had officially organized as the



Progressive Youth Association, drew increased attention to its efforts, eventually leading to higher-profile demonstrations and growing support for desegregation throughout Houston.

"After the sit-ins, we were able to sit in these types of restaurants," Hogrobrooks said. "It became apparent that there wasn't a need for segregation because the most important thing was a person's ability to pay for a service — that was the deciding factor if they could participate. Before, it had always been based on the color of their skin."

Sandifer-Walker, a Houston native, became particularly intrigued by the story. While researching and writing the historical marker's narrative, she met many of the original participants and shared their stories with her students, who helped produce several related multimedia projects. In the process, Sandifer-Walker was inspired by the students of 1960, who understood the legal system and organized efforts that would eventually dismantle segregation.

"This is not just a story about black students protesting, it's an American story," she said. "It's looking at the constitutionality of equality and embracing what it is to be an American. This story reminded me what a beautiful country we live in, with our ideals of justice and equality, courage and tenacity — anyone can accomplish something monumental."

Sandifer-Walker was surprised to find many people — particularly TSU students and Houston's young adults — were unfamiliar with the "truly undertold story" of the city's first sit-in, and she enthusiastically incorporated its inspirational message into her classroom. She enlisted students' help in developing a documentary, "Silencing Houston's Jim Crow Laws," and a web site (www.houstonstudentmovement.com), which preserve the legacy of Houston's "freedom fighters" in compelling formats easily accessible to the public.

Sandifer-Walker brings the story to life each semester by recreating the March 4, 1960 event. She takes her students to the site of the flagpole (now a grass-filled plaza), then to the nearby YMCA building where strategy sessions were held in the "war room" and finally along the same path the students took to Weingarten's 50 years ago.

On the way, she shares the history behind the movement, beginning with the events and people that prompted the TSU students into action. One of the most significant inspirations was a sit-in on Feb. 1, 1960, at a segregated lunch counter

in Greensboro, N.C., where four African American students were credited with pioneering this form of nonviolent protest.

The TSU students were also inspired by a respected businessman named Quentin Mease, director of the YMCA on Wheeler Street adjacent to the university. According to Sandifer-Walker, Mease played a vital role in the students' efforts by working with Houston's businessmen and leaders in the existing establishment to facilitate the demonstrations.

Hogrobrooks recalled another incident that inspired the students, despite its unintended purpose. "I give a lot of credit to Lyndon Johnson, who was a senator at the time. He made a comment to the media about Texas' negroes being too complacent to cause any problems," she said. "I went on to have great respect for him as a president, but after he made that comment, we gathered at that flagpole with a purpose."

After the TSU event, several other Houston sit-ins were organized, which drew increased attention to the movement. With the help of Mease, several high-profile establishments, including hotels and restaurants, were eventually desegregated. The continued sit-ins and demonstrations drew negative



publicity (and lost revenue) for Houston businesses, setting the stage for Mease and other African American businessmen to work with influential Houston leaders to dismantle Jim Crow laws. Their negotiations ultimately led to the desegregation of nearly 70 public lunch counters and an agreement that the Astrodome would open as an integrated facility.

"The March 4 event really changed this city — it helped us see hope, work together and make an impact on society," Sandifer-Walker said. "It's especially significant that youth were committed to a cause to make the world a better place."

Sandifer-Walker believes these types of accomplishments should be celebrated and recognized, in this

Opposite page: Texas Southern University students staged a sit-in at Weingarten's lunch counter on March 4, 1960 (photo courtesy Houston Public Library). Left: TSU professor Serbino Sandifer-Walker at the site where the students first gathered. Below: TSU students sing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" at Riesner Street jail (photo courtesy Houston Public Library, Texas Southern University's Heartman Collection).

case with the THC marker coinciding with the 50th anniversary. She hopes current and future generations will be inspired enough to get involved with community activism, resulting in a positive outcome with increased opportunities for all citizens.

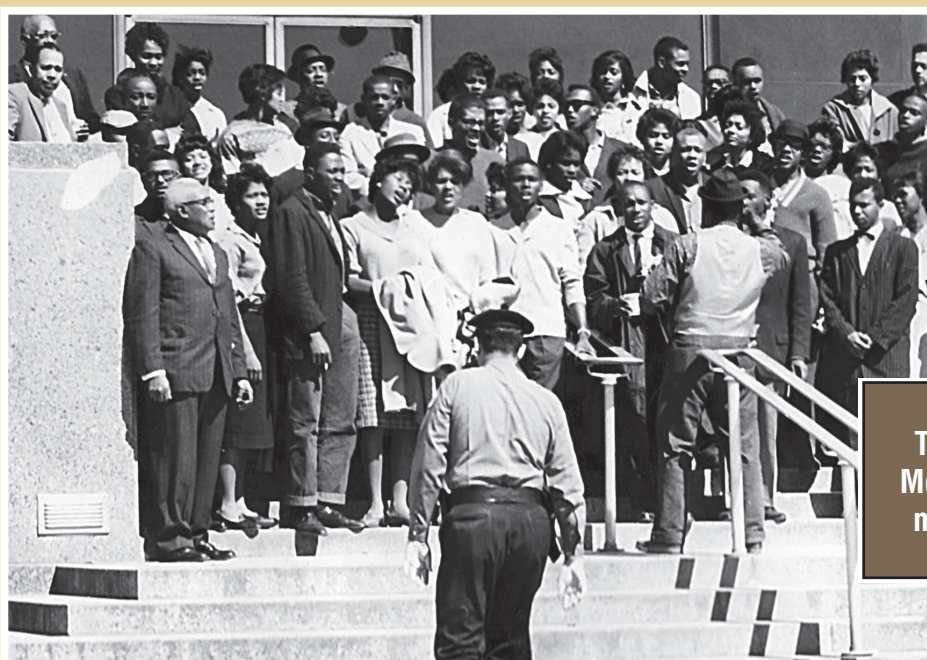
Hogrobrooks dismisses the commemoration as an activity for "those who came after my time to honor," but acknowledges that the significant events should serve as lessons for future generations.

"It was important that I was part of the activities that generated the impetus for changes that needed to be made, but I think these things should be observed rather than celebrated," she said. "You don't reward bad behavior, and blacks in Texas were on the receiving end of some really bad behavior."

Sandifer-Walker notes that Houston's desegregation efforts set a foundation for her own success; namely, as a Columbia University graduate with an accomplished career in broadcast journalism and as a TSU professor.

"This marker will now be there to inspire people every day," she said. "Each year I use the story to encourage young people, and I hope they come away thinking, 'If they did that, maybe I can make a difference, too.' " ★

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



To learn about African American History Month in Texas, visit www.thc.state.tx.us/news/whatsnewstories/wnaamnth.shtml

Archeologists Excavate Historic Plantation Site

Bernardo Was First and Largest Plantation in Republic of Texas

The sprawling green pasture in rural Waller County that once hosted Texas' largest plantation contains few hints of its historical significance. An old cistern with a tree growing in the center is all that visually remains above ground to tell the story of the Bernardo Plantation, where more than 100 people once lived and worked along the east bank of the Brazos River nearly 50 miles northwest of Houston.

Texas Historical Commission (THC) archeologists recently scoured the 1,500-acre property with ground-penetrating radar and magnetometer survey equipment to detect buried evidence of the structures and physical objects left behind at Bernardo, established in 1822 by Jared E. Groce, one of Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred settlers. The THC's remote sensing work revealed what appear to be intact remnants of the plantation's "Big House." According to THC Archeology Division Director Jim Bruseth, two chimneys were recently confirmed, providing significant evidence to accurately determine the placement and dimension of the building.

These findings validate Bernardo's previously documented structures, including the large 1 1/2-story home (the "Big House") constructed of cottonwood logs, a stand-alone kitchen and dairy, slaves' quarters, a travelers' hostel known as Bachelor's Hall and a cabin for the plantation's resident doctor. Other buildings on the property were used primarily by the field slaves, including family cabins, a communal kitchen, dining hall, day nursery, overseer's house, cotton gin and blacksmith shop.

The historic site was discovered by Wharton pediatrician and avocational archeologist Gregg Dimmick, who has authored two

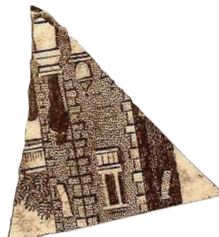
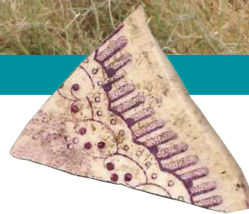


books on Texas history. Dimmick says the site was pointed out to him by fellow Texas history buff Jim Woodrick, who believed it to be the general area where Groce's plantation once stood.

Months later, while being interviewed for the Houston television program "Postcards from Texas" on another topic, Dimmick learned station owner Greg Brown, who is also the publisher of *Cowboys and Indians* magazine, owned the land Woodrick had referenced. Dimmick contacted Brown, resulting in a tour of the property last April.

"The tour was a wonderful day for Jim and me — Greg showed us the old family cemetery, the cistern

for the main plantation home, the old Coushatta crossing and then let us scout around on our own," recalls Dimmick. "I decided this site was way too historically significant for the likes of Jim and me. We felt even more strongly as we began to search the archives and found that Bachelor's Hall had housed Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston, the Whartons — just about all the big names of Texas history."



Left: THC archeologists (from left) Bill Pierson and Tiffany Osburn conduct magnetometer surveys at the Bernardo Plantation site. Below: A sampling of artifacts unearthed during recent excavations.

The collection of structures was a beehive of activity nearly 200 years ago, with large family gatherings, frequent visitors and ambitious crop production. Bernardo is considered the South's last major cotton plantation and represents the country's farthest westward plantation expansion.

"With regards to Texas' early history, its location in the Brazos Valley is where the South became the West," says Texas State Historian Light Cummins. "Bernardo was where plantation history began in our state with the planting of the first cotton crop in the Austin colony, and in terms of slave numbers, it

remained the largest plantation in the Republic of Texas."

Ten days before the monumental Battle of San Jacinto, the

Bernardo plantation provided the facilities, services and strategic location for Sam Houston and his Texian soldiers to prepare for the Mexican army. Houston's men used the blacksmith shop to make bullets, the slaves' quarters for lodging and the plantation's crops for provisions. Women helped by making sandbags for use in battle and by attending to sick soldiers.

Over the course of this busy week, Bernardo became an epicenter for the Texans' activities. The Twin Sisters cannons arrived at Bernardo from supporters in Ohio and, nearby, the steamboat *Yellow Stone* was waiting to ferry soldiers across

the Brazos River. Meanwhile, large groups of people fleeing Mexican Gen. Santa Anna's approaching troops were arriving in what has come to be known as the Runaway Scrape.

Last summer and fall, THC archeologists and Houston-based Community Archaeology Research Institute, Inc. (CARI) representatives spent several days surveying the property with high-tech equipment. The results are being analyzed by CARI's co-principal investigators, Dr. Carol McDavid and Robert Marcom, who are encouraged by their findings.

"As we began to recover artifacts, we were presented with some of the most poignant experiences an archeologist can have," Marcom reports. "For instance, finding a heavy hoe blade that's more than 170 years old is a reminder of both the economic possibilities that the early settlers hoped to exploit as well as the terrible human cost that enslavement exacted on those who were forced to labor under the hot Texas sun."

Marcom adds that archeologists also discovered wagon and harness pieces, fragments of ceramic vessels and hand-blown glass, all likely freighted in at some expense. These bits of household goods serve as reminders of the everyday life of the people who settled Texas.

In the coming year, archeologists expect to specifically locate and document the plantation's structures and other significant items, including the nearby gravestones related to a subsequent family on the property, historic metal artifacts and the location of the original ferry. With extensive documentation and interpretation, the real stories of this remarkable chapter of the state's rich history will soon be told.

"Given the results of the surveys conducted by the historical commission and the excellent

preliminary work conducted by Gregg Dimmick, Jim Woodrick and many others, we have high hopes for this site," Marcom says. "It's also important to note that the possibility for extensive and intensive research is only possible due to the extraordinary access granted to us by Greg Brown. He has offered a degree of cooperation and assistance that archeologists seldom receive."

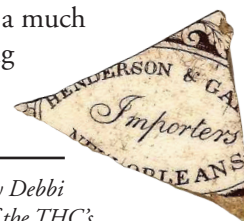
McDavid adds that it will be interesting to consider what it was like to live and work in the historic space and to attempt to determine how things changed over time.

"We're interested in the Native American elements that may be present, given that the old Coushatta crossing is located there," she says. "The use of the space may go back into antiquity, and the opportunities for involving a variety of descendant groups is very exciting."

CARI will also continue to manage the Bernardo Plantation Archeology Project founded by Dimmick, Woodrick and Brown. The Bernardo group hopes the site will only be partially excavated, leaving some areas for future experts and techniques.

"Our goal for the project is for the site to be excavated in the most modern, professional and scientifically possible manner," said Dimmick. "I hope we can use the site as a learning tool for archeology classes, field schools, avocational archeologists and the like. I think the main thing we will gain from the excavations and investigations is a much greater understanding of plantation life in early Texas." ★

This article was written by Debbi Head and Andy Rhodes of the THC's Marketing Communications Division.



Preservation Collaboration

Efforts Combined to Promote Heritage Tourism in East Texas

In the middle of downtown Nacogdoches sit two historic cemeteries, Oak Grove and Zion Hill, serving as tangible reminders of the rich cultural history of a community governed under nine flags. While the inhabitants of the cemeteries are unable to tell their stories, a group of historians, educators and researchers hope to resurrect their tales with the help of a Preserve America grant.

The “Community Based Cemetery Interpretation: Linking Heritage, Preservation, GIS, Curriculum and Web Services” project was awarded \$250,000 through the National Park Service’s (NPS) Preserve America grant program in 2008. Now in its second year, the grant has brought together an interdisciplinary team from the City of Nacogdoches, Stephen F.

Austin State University (SFA), a seasoned veteran of the NPS and community members from the Nacogdoches area.

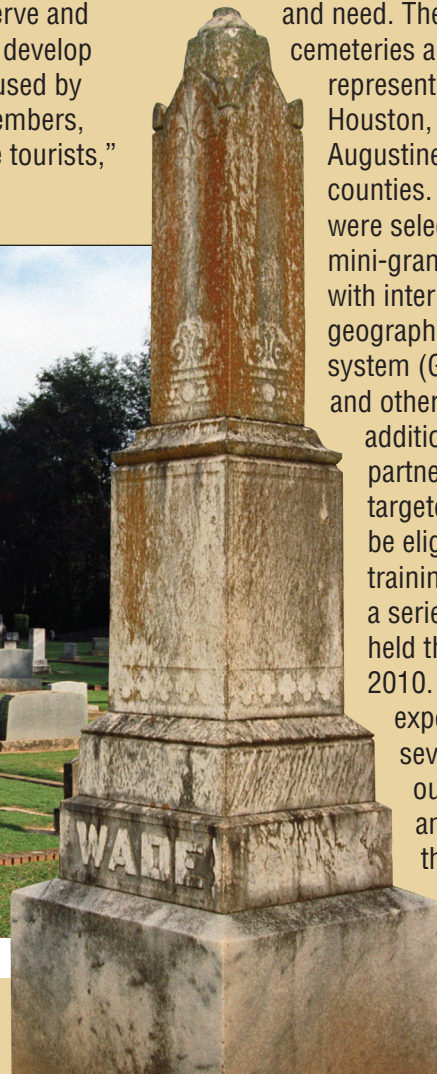
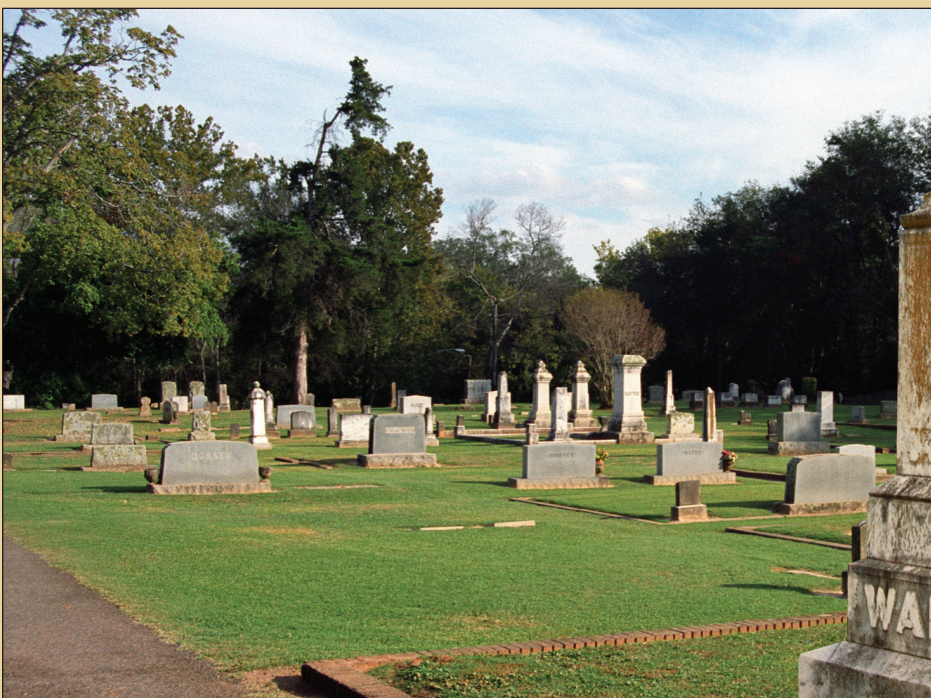
Although the grant focuses on the two significant cemeteries — Oak Grove, where Republic of Texas notables Thomas J. Rusk and Bennett Blake are buried, and Zion Hill, an African-American cemetery with many unmarked burials — it also includes cemeteries along the eastern Texas route of El Camino Real de Los Tejas, the legendary trail that once connected Natchitoches, Louisiana, with Mexico City.

“The idea behind the grant was to raise awareness of important cultural resources, preserve and interpret these sites and develop tangible products to be used by teachers, community members, researchers and heritage tourists,”

says Chay Runnels, assistant professor of hospitality and tourism at SFA.

Her colleague Dr. Theresa Coble, project coordinator and associate professor of forest recreation and interpretation, adds, “The beauty of this project is that it is truly interdisciplinary — we have faculty and staff from across our university who are working with historical societies and heritage tourism organizations along the Camino Real.”

In June 2009, the grant team traveled to workshops along El Camino Real de los Tejas to identify sites with special significance and need. They visited eight cemeteries and met with representatives from Houston, Cherokee, San Augustine and Sabine counties. Eleven cemeteries were selected to receive mini-grant funding to assist with interpretation, signage, geographic information system (GIS) services and other projects. In addition, community partners from each targeted county will be eligible to receive training and guidance at a series of workshops held throughout 2010. The project is expected to produce several noteworthy outcomes, including an interactive map that will allow



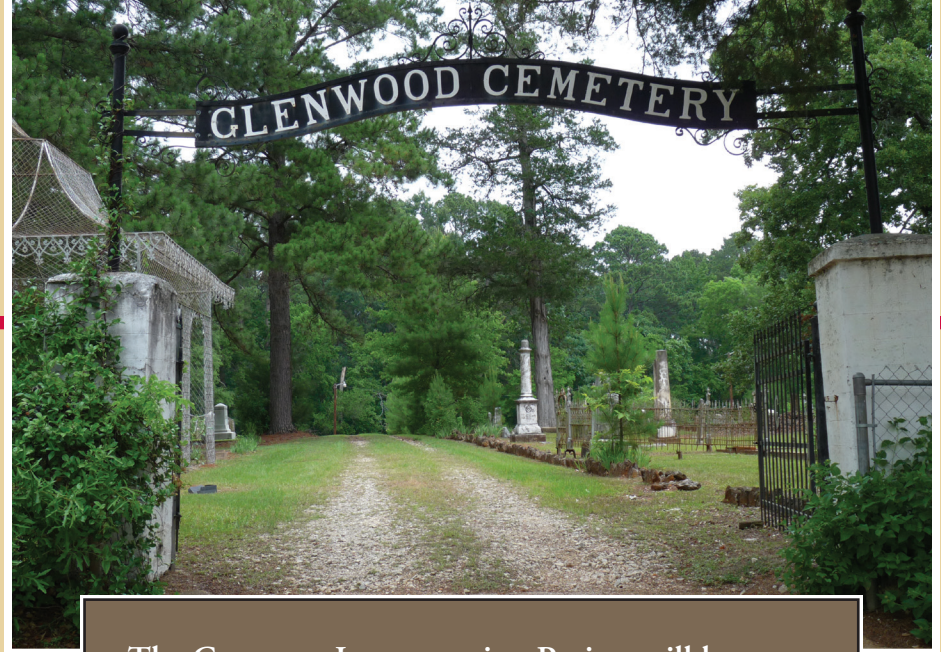
Opposite page: Oak Grove Cemetery in Nacogdoches. Below and right: the Cemetery Interpretation Project showcases sites along El Camino Real de los Tejas.



researchers to “virtually” visit Oak Grove and Zion Hill cemeteries, the development of a database that will feature heritage tourism itineraries and resources, lesson plans and supporting materials for K-12 teachers, and a series of podcasts and site bulletins for several of the cemeteries in this phase of the initiative.

“We’re hoping to raise community awareness of the value of cemeteries for heritage preservation and economic development,” Coble says, adding that the project will also facilitate the collection of spatial data and the archiving of cemetery resources in an online digital library format.

This digital library (available at www.tides.sfasu.edu) will showcase a compilation of local cemetery information that expands as more communities participate. Online content will be provided for up to 10 cemeteries during the initial project timeframe. In addition, workshops and technical assistance will focus on topics such as historical research, oral histories, curriculum-based education, digital imaging and archiving, use of web templates, cemetery designation and cemetery access and advocacy. Mini-grants



The Cemetery Interpretation Project will host a “Community Partners Kick-off Event” on Jan. 28 from 10 a.m.–1 p.m. on the SFA campus. Attendees will learn more about the project, sign up for cemetery workshops, view project videos, publications and lesson plans, and see demonstrations of the interactive web site developed for the project. Anyone interested in participating is welcome to attend. RSVPs are required to confirm seating. Please contact Chay Runnels (936.468.2060) or Theresa Coble (817.235.7842) for more information or to RSVP.

will allow community members to become actively involved in cemetery-related projects in their hometowns.

Work on the project has already begun, with two cemetery preservation workshops held in Nacogdoches in the summer of 2009. Dr. Perky Beisel and Dr. Jere Jackson of the SFA history department have been working on researching the family histories of those buried in the cemeteries. Dr. Leslie Cecil, assistant professor of anthropology, along with SFA students, have also completed identification of unmarked graves in Zion Hill Cemetery, and extensive work has been conducted by Dr. I-Kuai Hung and Dr. Dan Unger of the Arthur Temple College of Forestry at SFA.

“It’s our hope that these sites can come alive for visitors and researchers, and that the history and significance of these people’s lives will reach a new generation along El Camino Real,” Coble said.

Adds Runnels, “Ideally, someone in another state who is interested in genealogy or heritage tourism could go to the web site and call up their cemetery of interest, click on a particular gravesite and access information from various sources. They might find a picture of the tombstone, a newspaper clipping of the obituary, photos of the person buried there, a virtual tour of the entire cemetery or even a link to lesson plans for teachers — all in one place.” ★

WEATHERING THE STORMS

Heritage Attractions in Sabine Pass, Port Arthur Emerging from Recent Hurricanes

It's been more than a year since Hurricane Ike ravaged Texas' upper coastline with devastating winds and water damage, yet signs of recovery are still steadfastly emerging as the region recuperates from the wreckage.

Though Galveston continues to make headlines with its revitalization efforts, other Gulf Coast communities — Sabine Pass and Port Arthur, in particular — are also replacing windows, replanting trees and resurrecting “open” signs as businesses and heritage tourism attractions strive to recapture customers.

One of the Gulf Coast locations hit hardest was Sabine Pass Battleground State Historic Site, a Texas Historical Commission (THC) property on the Texas-Louisiana border. The THC acquired the site the same year Ike hit (2008) and three years after hurricanes Katrina and Rita collided with the coast (2005). According to Sabine Pass maintenance supervisor Efrem Hill, the area's years-long recovery efforts are ongoing.

“You look around here and still see busted up buildings and signs — even some of the roads and bridges are still in bad shape,” he says. “But I’ve also seen signs of hope. We made it through last season without any hurricanes and that’s really good news. It’s going to take awhile longer to get things back to normal, but we’ve made some progress and we’re definitely turning things around.”

The focus in 2010 is to implement a master plan for the site containing a host of visitor services, including re-erected historical markers and new interpretive panels providing information about the namesake Civil War battle that occurred on Sept. 8, 1863. According to THC historians, the battle site is well suited for the agency's mission since it represents one of the state's most significant Civil War conflicts.

Although there were no major land battles in Texas during the war, Sabine Pass was considered one of the Confederate Army's most successful maritime victories. Union forces attempting to secure access to railroads and valuable cotton-shipping routes sent four gunboats to invade Fort Griffin, just a few miles north of where the Sabine River empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

The thousands of Union soldiers significantly outnumbered the Confederate forces, which were armed with approximately 40 men and six mounted cannons. Despite these odds, the Confederate troops, under the command of Lt. Richard Dowling, fired on the advancing gunboats with impressive accuracy, resulting in a fatal explosion from a direct shot to the boiler of the *Sachem*, and causing the *Clifton* to run aground from a precisely fired cannon. By the end of the battle, Dowling's men, primarily consisting of the Davis Guards of the First Texas Heavy Artillery Regiment, had captured 300 Union prisoners and two gunboats.





Opposite page: The statue of Lt. Richard Dowling at Sabine Pass Battleground was undergoing an extensive cleaning at press time; (inset) Port Arthur's Pompeiiian Villa. Left: Port Arthur's Queen of Vietnamese Martyrs Catholic Church garden. Below: Vuylsteke Dutch Home in Port Arthur.

"It's a truly significant story — the Confederates were severely outnumbered yet they remained dedicated to their cause and notched an unexpected victory," says Brett Cruse, sites supervisor with the THC's Historic Sites Division. "It represents an important Civil War conflict in Texas, so we're proud to be able to tell that story and interpret the battle site."

Despite the storm damage, Sabine Pass visitors can still discover items that tell the real stories of the military activities that took place at the site over the course of a century. Most striking is the recently restored bronze statue of Dowling, which presides over the grounds atop a stately monument dedicated to the men who fought in the battle. Other monuments are located along a pathway near the waterfront, including a granite memorial commemorating the Union soldiers that lost their lives in the battle and a historical marker for Fort Griffin, which stood at the site from 1863–65. In addition, several large World War II-era ammunition magazines constructed as part of the U.S. military's coastal defense project are located throughout the grounds.

The site also draws a considerable number of recreational travelers, particularly visitors who appreciate the abundant fishing opportunities,

picnicking and boat access, and scenic views of the water and historic lighthouse on the Louisiana side of the pass. Even those unfamiliar with the history of the site are drawn by its compelling story and captivating scenery.

"People really enjoy being at the exact place where these historic events happened and seeing precisely where the battle unfolded," Cruse says. "Even if you're not familiar with the details of the battle, you can still get a good sense of where the gunboats came up the pass and where the Confederate troops were stationed."

Cruse and Hill both express optimism about the future of the site, claiming the difficult lessons learned from hurricane devastation put them in a better position to prepare for the future. The Sabine Pass interpretive master plan — including provisions for panels and markers to be reinforced with metal and concrete — will ensure the site remains a popular and viable heritage tourism destination for decades to come.

"Despite all the violent things that happened out here with the military battle and hurricanes, this is still a real peaceful place," Hill says. "People will keep coming, that's for sure. There's no other place like this in the entire state of Texas."



Get to the Port

Like Sabine Pass, Port Arthur experienced severe hurricane damage during the past several years. It is also similarly emerging from the devastation and polishing its heritage tourism gems for travelers to experience and enjoy.

Despite the surface appearance of weather-beaten homes and empty downtown buildings, Port Arthur retains a rich history that comes to life in its house museums and cultural attractions. In the early 1900s, the small community became a boomtown after the discovery of oil at nearby Spindletop brought major companies (Texaco and Gulf) to the city to build refineries. According to the Handbook of Texas Online, it was the nation's second largest oil-refining area by 1914, and its population increased from 7,663 residents in 1910 to more than 50,000 two decades later.



The stories of the region's history and fast-paced growth are on display at the remarkable **Museum of the Gulf Coast**. Visitors learn about the lifeways of Port Arthur's early Native American groups and the region's European explorers in educational displays on the extensive ground floor. One of the more interesting panels includes details about town founder Arthur Stilwell's occult-related visions and development inspirations.

Upstairs, the museum contains several captivating pop-culture wings, including areas dedicated to regional music, entertainment and sports celebrities. The music wing is particularly impressive, with exhibits related to famous native Janis Joplin — including a replica of her eye-popping psychedelic Porsche (the original is in Cleveland's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame) — along with memorabilia from other regional artists, including George Jones, J.P.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION



"The Big Bopper" Richardson and Tex Ritter. The adjacent local legends wing features a surprising number of notable natives, including sports stars like Babe Didrickson Zaharias, Jimmy Johnson, Bud and Wade Phillips and Charles "Bubba" Smith alongside well-known public figures such as Price Daniel, Allan Shivers, cowboy showman Rudy Robbins and actor G.W. Bailey ("Police Academy").

Port Arthur is also home to the **Texas Artists Museum**, a small yet spirited facility showcasing regional and statewide artists and performers. The museum features a modest permanent collection and regular traveling exhibits, and the building hosts local art groups and performances by drama, dance and musical acts.

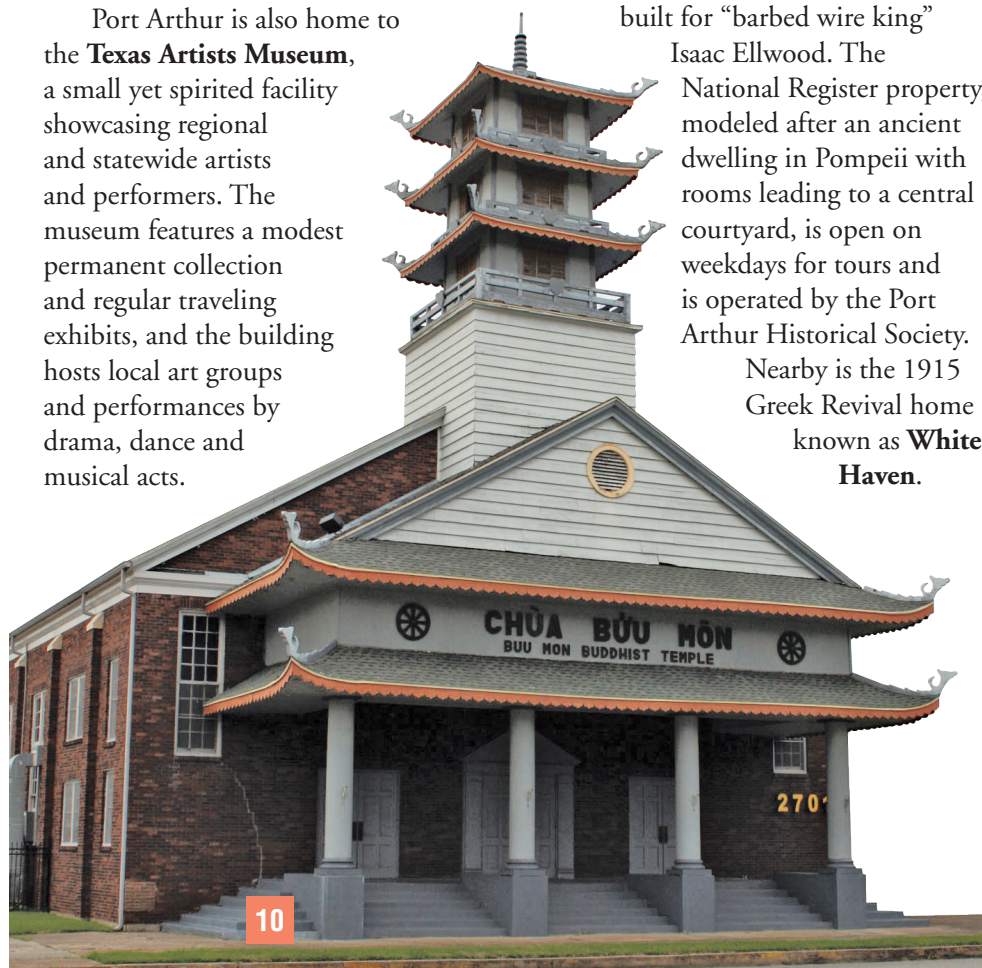
To experience Port Arthur's heyday, visit one of the several notable house museums, each offering a distinctive window to the past when the booming oil business brought high-profile people and millions of dollars to the city.

Most of the prestigious homes were built along the seawall on or near Lakeshore Drive. From downtown, visitors can begin the trek eastward at the **Vuylsteke Dutch Home**, a 1905 Colonial Revival house built for Dutch counsel A.J.M. Vuylsteke now owned by the adjacent Lamar State College. The home, accessible only by private tour, features high ceilings, spacious rooms, mementos representing household objects from a Dutch immigrant family and an extensive veranda designed to capture the cool breezes from nearby Lake Sabine.

Just down the street is the striking **Pompeiiian Villa**, a pink 1900 stucco homestead with prominent Italian design elements built for "barbed wire king"

Isaac Ellwood. The National Register property, modeled after an ancient dwelling in Pompeii with rooms leading to a central courtyard, is open on weekdays for tours and is operated by the Port Arthur Historical Society.

Nearby is the 1915 Greek Revival home known as **White Haven**.



If You Go...

Buu Mon Temple

409.982.9319

www.buumon.org

Museum of the Gulf Coast

409.982.7000

www.museumofthegulfcoast.org

Pompeiiian Villa

409.983.5977

Rose Hill Manor

409.985.7292

Sabine Pass Battleground State Historic Site

409.332.8820

www.visitspb.com

Texas Artists Museum

409.983.4881

www.texasartistsmuseum.org

Vuylsteke Dutch Home

409.983.4921

White Haven

409.983.4921



Left: A replica of Janis Joplin's car on display at the Museum of the Gulf Coast.

Opposite page: Buu Mon Temple and White Haven.

On the cover: Sabine Pass Battleground.

Now owned by Lamar State College and available for tours, the house is an architectural marvel featuring large columns and extensive breeze-capturing porches on the first and second floors. Inside, the enormous rooms contain Victorian-era furnishings and artwork from throughout Europe and the U.S.

Near the end of Lakeshore Drive is **Rose Hill Manor**, which remains one of the city's most popular gathering places for social events. Built in 1906 for Port Arthur banker and mayor Rhome Woodworth, the Greek Revival home and National Register property is open for daily tours and features elegant furnishings in 14 rooms, impressive architectural detailing on its Ionic columns and finely manicured grounds.

While downtown, continue with a cultural tour by visiting the nearby **Buu Mon Buddhist Temple**, established 30 years ago in Beaumont (which inspired its name) and relocated several years

later to its current location in a historic Baptist church. A traditional Buddhist four-tiered stupa is now located where the steeple stood, and the sanctuary contains a seven-foot tall bronze Buddha in the altar area. The temple is open to the public for Sunday services, and residents and visitors are encouraged to attend weekly meditation gatherings and other community events. The temple is best known for its lush and colorful Lotus Garden, which draws hundreds of visitors each spring for tours showcasing the large lotus flowers, numerous rare bamboo, bonsai trees, and rare fruit bushes and water lilies.

"We like to think that we represent a little bit of Southeast Asia in Southeast Texas," says Mathew Rhone, a recently ordained monk who lives at the temple.

Port Arthur's sizable Vietnamese community — many were drawn to the area for its abundant shrimping opportunities — is also represented at the **Queen of Vietnamese**

Martyrs Catholic Church, where an enormous statue of the Virgin Mary presides over a flourishing garden. The shrine was built by congregation members to express gratitude to the Port Arthur community for its warm welcome.

Just down the road is another impressive Catholic monument, the **Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe**. This 17-foot bronze statue was created by Mexican artists and is surrounded by a large courtyard with arched walls containing colorful stained glass windows.

To learn more about heritage tourism destinations in the Sabine Pass and Port Arthur area, contact the THC's Texas Forest Trail Region at 936.560.3699, or visit www.texasforesttrail.com. To order a free copy of the THC's *Texas Forest Trail Region* travel guide, call 866.276.6219 or visit www.thc.state.tx.us. ★

Article and photos by Andy Rhodes, managing editor of The Medallion.

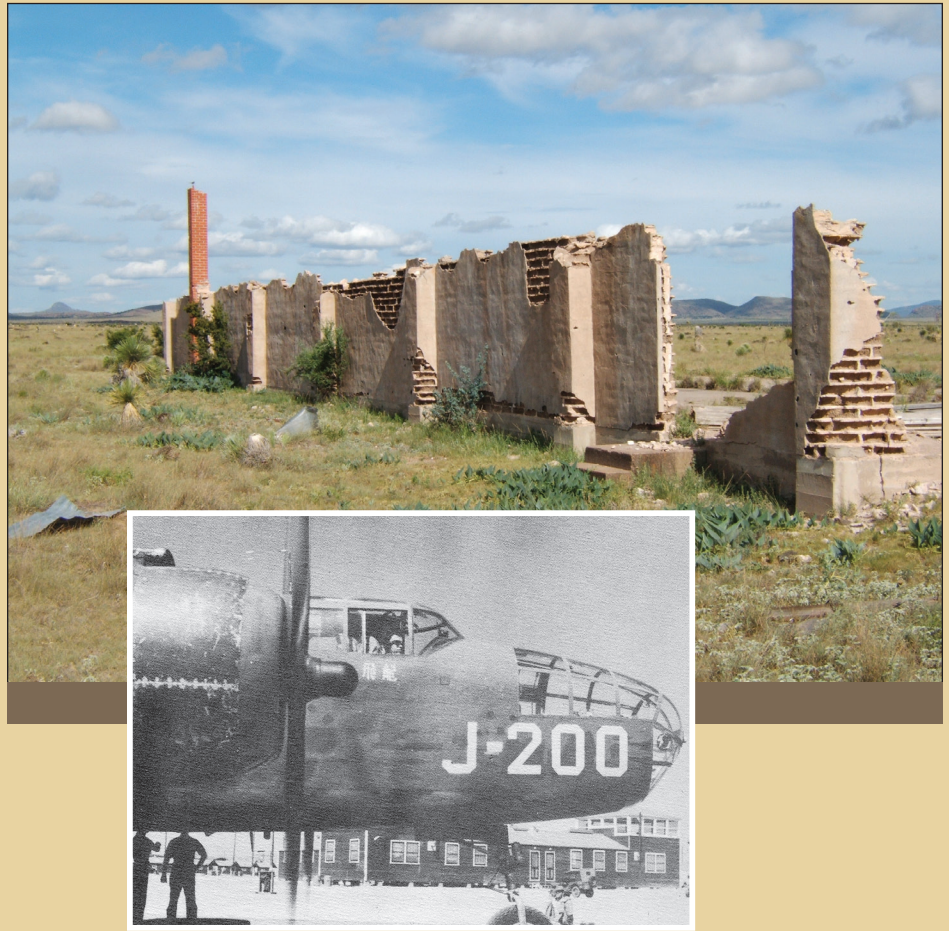
Statewide Surveys

Oral Histories Document Texas' Vital Role in World War II

Standing on historic ground and hearing the stories of predecessors puts people in an ideal frame of mind to consider the importance of preserving their cultural heritage for future generations. Texas may not possess battlefields such as Guadalcanal or Anzio, but our state includes a wealth of sites that are important to telling the story of the World War II experience.

Since Sept. 2, 2005, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) has documented the state's World War II sites through the Texas in World War II initiative, a program to honor and preserve the memories of Texans who served in the armed forces during World War II and the contributions they made to the war effort. To date, the initiative has produced 21 special historical markers, a commemorative brochure, the far-reaching oral history training workshop series "Here and There: Recollections of Texas in World War II" and a comprehensive statewide historic sites survey.

This past summer, the THC's Military Sites Program staff launched the final stage of an ambitious effort to develop the state's first comprehensive historic sites survey related to the role Texas and Texans played in World War II. Generous donations from the Hillcrest Foundation, Abell-Hanger Foundation, Ed Rachal Foundation, Trull Foundation, Joe Barnhart Foundation, O'Connor & Hewitt Foundation, Strake Foundation, Hobby Family Foundation and the Meadows Foundation made this unique statewide survey a reality. Over the past three months, initial surveys in several regions — the Panhandle's northwestern counties,



the Coastal Bend and the Rio Grande Valley — yielded unique sites that confirm the importance of this survey. The project also benefited from the assistance of Austin-based Ecological Communications Corporation, a consulting firm that is working with THC historians.

Documenting the Texas experience during the war is no small task. By 1945, more than 193 counties hosted military installations, home front sites or both. Equally as impressive is that these 1,400-plus military sites did not exist in a vacuum separate from everyday life. Communities purposefully sought out and benefited from the federal government's economic investment in Texas via airfields,

naval installations, U.S. Army posts, aerial bombing targets, Department of Justice "alien internment camps" (the largest of its kind in the country was in Crystal City), manufacturing sites, oil refineries, draft boards, United Service Organizations and other associated locales.

"These sites brought new jobs to communities all across the state," explains Bob Brinkman, THC historian. "As a result, thousands of people looking for employment moved from rural areas to cities, shifting Texas steadily away from an agrarian economy to an industrial economy. It's fair to say this dramatic impact modernized and urbanized our state."

After more than six decades, much of the built environment of the military and home front sites has been razed. Leaving no stone unturned, the THC's Military Sites Program will continue to seek primary document information and secondary sources, as well as explore unconventional or rare resources such as web-based (www.youtube.com) World War II-era videos and private family 8mm movies filmed in Texas that provide vivid images of the state's World War II landscape.

Complementing this research is the local input from nearly 250 county historical commissions (CHC), offering an effective approach to gaining reliable information on the whereabouts, dimensions and history of military and home front sites in Texas. The THC has gathered public input from rural and urban communities at CHC meetings, which are often combined with the initiative's well-received oral history training workshop series.

The "Here and There" oral history training workshop series

highlights Texans and the state's involvement in the war effort. The Houston Endowment and the Summerlee Foundation of Dallas have funded this workshop series, designed to educate people about conducting and recording oral histories pertaining to World War II.

Since 2007, the THC has paired public input meetings of World War II military and home front sites with the workshops to provide history enthusiasts the opportunity to discuss their local sites, share stories and assist THC historians with the statewide survey. From these forums, the THC has gained a great deal of information and historic photographs of several former key military installations and home front industries that have virtually disappeared from the landscape. To date, the THC has coordinated more than 30 meetings across the state with enthusiastic responses from local preservationists interested in sharing what they know and curious to learn what the THC has already documented.

Many of this year's workshops and survey trips are still in the planning stages; however, events are confirmed for January 2010 in Port Lavaca and El Paso. These workshops and the corresponding survey trips have provided the THC with an ever-increasing database supporting the concept of World War II as the definitive 20th-century event that transformed the state's landscape and ushered in the Texas we experience today.

A wealth of World War II sites in varying levels of condition remain throughout Texas and are important in conveying the state's wartime experience. Those interested in submitting information and historic photos about World War II military and home front sites in their community can contact the THC's Military Historian William McWhorter at 512.463.5833, william.mcwhorter@thc.state.tx.us or by mail at P.O. Box 12276, Austin, Texas 78711-2276. ★

This article was written by William McWhorter of the THC's History Programs Division.

Opposite page: Marfa Army Air Field, July 2007. Inset: B-25 bomber on tarmac at Marfa Army Air Field. Below: Italian prisoner of war camp memorial chapel at Camp Hereford. Right: Crystal City (Alien) Family Internment Camp swimming/irrigation pool.



Texas Heroes

- Ebby Halliday Acers, Dallas
- Killis and Beverly Almond, San Antonio
- Carolyn M. Appleton, Corpus Christi
- Peggy and Ray Bailey, Houston
- Jane and John Barnhill, Brenham
- Dolph Briscoe, Jr., Uvalde
- J.P. Bryan, Houston
- Diane and Stuart Bumpas, Dallas
- Shirley and Clifton Caldwell, Albany
- Harold and Joyce Courson, Perryton
- Mary and Thomas Duncan, Lufkin
- Glen S. Ely, Fort Worth
- Mary Carroll Foley, Houston
- Albert "Boo" and Meta Hausser, San Antonio
- Sarita and Bob Hixon, Houston
- Loyce Ince, San Antonio
- Lewis and Judith Jones, Buda
- Sheri and Winston Krause, Austin
- Harriet and Truett Latimer, Houston
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A Salute to the Texas Heroes

A Special Council of Philanthropists

In the old Saturday matinée Westerns, you always knew who the hero was. He wore a white hat, followed the Code of the West and had a powerful moral compass. His selfless dedication to the public good brought new order and prosperity that lingered long after he rode away into the sunset.

Modern heroes may not wear iconic garb or ride a valiant steed, but their contributions have the same effect. Today's heroes can still be identified by a generous spirit and a commitment to the greater good. The Texas Historical Commission (THC) is fortunate to have the support of a very special council of philanthropists — the Texas Heroes — who ensure the agency's mission of historic preservation and economic development can continue to thrive even in difficult economic times.

Since the program's inception, the Texas Heroes have contributed more than \$200,000 to support a wide variety of projects for which state funds cannot be used. For example, the Heroes sponsor the T. R. Fehrenbach Book Awards and the Distinguished Service Awards celebration at the Annual Historic Preservation Conference each spring. They also help to underwrite the annual THC awards ceremony. Over the years, the members of the Texas Heroes have allowed the THC to honor those who represent "The Best of the Best" in conserving and promoting the rich cultural legacy of our state.

Would you like to become a Texas Hero? As someone who is interested in preserving the exciting and colorful history of our state, we would welcome your involvement with the THC through membership in our special group of contributors. We invite you to become a Texas Hero through a contribution of \$1,000 per year to the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission.

Our goal is to engage hundreds of Texas preservationists in building

a strong foundation of financial support for THC programs for which public funding is not available. We invite you to be our special

partner in protecting, preserving and promoting the unique history of our state. In these challenging economic times, the support of the Texas Heroes means more than ever, and helps to ensure our state's historic resources are preserved for the education, enjoyment and economic benefit of future generations.

2009 was a very good year for the Commission. With new leadership and new programs at the THC, the coming year also holds great promise, but we need your support to help achieve our goals. As a Texas Hero, you can make a difference and have a personal impact on historic preservation. Won't you join us?

For more information about the Texas Heroes program, contact Toni Turner at 512.936.2241 or at toni.turner@thc.state.tx.us. ★





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real places telling real stories

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New Visionaries in Preservation Communities Selected

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) recently announced the selection of three new communities to participate in the Visionaries in Preservation (VIP) program. Beaumont, Eastland and Gonzales were chosen to work with this program, which provides cities with the opportunity to plan for the future and implement revitalization projects.

The three cities join 31 other communities participating in the VIP Program that utilize historic preservation as a vital element to create jobs, provide affordable quality housing, increase economic development and revitalize downtown business districts. The VIP Program helps establish a path to capture these benefits using an innovative planning process known as “visioning,” a tool that brings citizens together to develop a shared image of the future and the steps needed to achieve specific goals.

The visioning process consists of a series of facilitated public workshops that produce a local preservation action plan based on community input with guidance from THC staff. The action plan’s advantage is its simplicity and clarity, allowing the community to more effectively manage its historic resources.

To learn more about the VIP Program, contact the THC’s Community Heritage Development Division at 512.463.6092, or visit www.thc.state.tx.us.



President George H.W. Bush and Gen. James T. Conway of the United States Marine Corps (center) cut the ribbon with dignitaries (from left) Gen. Michael W. Hagee (USMC Ret.) of the Admiral Nimitz Foundation, THC Chairman Jon Hansen, Barbara Bush and Gov. Rick Perry at the groundbreaking ceremony for the reopening of the expanded National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg on Dec. 7, 2009.

THC Announces Main Street Cities

The THC recently designated Wills Point as a 2010 official Texas Main Street city and accepted Eagle Pass as a recertified city. These cities join more than 88 others representing the real places of Texas by participating in the downtown revitalization program sponsored by the THC.

“The Texas Main Street Program is one of our most successful and recognized programs,” said THC Chairman Jon Hansen. “We have seen tremendous accomplishments in both large and small Main Street communities in the past 28 years, and we believe the new communities will be among our most notable programs.”

Main Street cities hold a kickoff in their communities including a visit from the Texas First Lady. Each city also receives free technical and design assistance and training from the THC’s Texas Main Street Program staff as long as the city participates in the program. In addition, a Main Street resource team will visit the cities and offer short- and long-term recommendations for rehabilitating buildings, attracting new businesses and promoting tourism.

For more information about the Texas Main Street Program, contact State Coordinator Debra Farst at 512.463.5758 or debra.farst@thc.state.tx.us.

Summerlee Foundation Receives Historic Lands Plaques

The THC recently presented two Historic Texas Lands Plaques to the Summerlee Foundation of Dallas for its dedication to the Medicine Mound Ranch archeological site in Hardeman County and Sarahville de Viesca in Falls County.

Medicine Mound Ranch takes its name from four geological features located along the eastern edge of the site. The mounds were believed to have been sacred to the Comanche Tribe for their possible healing powers and represent a significant cultural resource revealing important knowledge about the prehistory of the Rolling Plains. During the THC’s examination of the area, approximately 750 acres of the 6,100-acre ranch were surveyed resulting in the identification of several archeological sites.

National Register News

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources deemed worthy of preservation, including more than 3,000 listings in Texas. Listing affords properties a measure of protection from the impact of federally funded projects, as well as access to technical expertise, tax credits and grant funds to facilitate preservation. The following recently listed historic properties represent the real stories reflecting Texas' rich cultural heritage.

Farnsworth & Chambers Building — Houston, Harris County

The 1956 Farnsworth & Chambers building was designed by the Houston firm MacKie & Kamrath, and exhibits a regional adaptation of Frank Lloyd Wright's Mayan-influenced projects. Built as the home office for a major construction firm, the building later served as headquarters for NASA's Manned Spacecraft Center while the Clear Lake campus — later named Johnson Space Center — was designed and constructed. The building was listed in the National Register at the national level of significance.



R.J. Hill Building — Palacios, Matagorda County

Built in 1910, the R.J. Hill Building is one of the oldest commercial buildings in the town of Palacios. The two-story building, constructed of cast concrete blocks, has notable features that include the round-arched entries and window openings indicative of the Romanesque Revival style. The building has been a mainstay of Palacios' small downtown district, serving as a general store, doctor's office, beer parlor and other commercial uses throughout its history.

Additional recent National Register listings include: Celina's **Celina Public School** (Collin County), Dallas' **Fidelity Union Building** (Dallas County) and Palacios' **Price-Farwell House** (Matagorda County).

The Summerlee Foundation purchased more than 400 acres in Falls County to preserve the historic Sarahville de Viesca settlement and a slave cemetery known as Bull Hill, which is contained on the property. THC archeologists conducted remote sensing investigations, as well as test excavations at the location of what was the 1834 land office of Robertson's Colony. The Summerlee Foundation also permitted THC archeologists, working in concert with a former THC Preservation Fellow, to document and protect the Bull Hill cemetery, as well as locate descendants of those interred.

The Summerlee Foundation is a private, nonprofit charitable organization whose purposes are restricted to programs in Texas history and animal protection. As

a strong advocate of collaborative projects with historical organizations, the Summerlee Foundation has funded a wide variety of Texas history programs.

To learn more about protecting archeological sites throughout Texas, contact the THC's Archeology Division at 512.463.6096, or visit www.thc.state.tx.us.

THC Executive Director Pens Forward for Architecture Book

The upcoming architecture photography book by Greater Houston Preservation Alliance (GHPA) staff members David Bush and Jim Parsons, *Hill Country Deco: Modernistic Architecture of Central Texas* (TCU Press), will feature a

foreword by THC Executive Director Mark Wolfe.

The book documents the Art Deco and Art Moderne architecture and Depression-era public art of Austin, San Antonio and surrounding communities. *Hill Country Deco* is scheduled for release in October 2010 in conjunction with the National Trust for Historic Preservation conference in Austin. The GHPA is Houston's designated local partner of the National Trust.

Hill Country Deco is the follow-up to Bush and Parsons' *Houston Deco: Modernistic Architecture of the Texas Coast* released in January 2008. *Houston Deco* and its companion web site, www.houstondeco.org, include original images of notable modernistic buildings in southeast Texas. ★

Fort Griffin's Historical Monument Reunites with Texans

Visitors to Fort Griffin State Historic Site near Albany should keep an eye out for something old and something new. Among the austere fort ruins near the visitor center is the stunning Fort Griffin centennial monument, originally erected with state funds in 1936. Restored to its 1930s configuration by the Texas Historical Commission (THC) in July 2009, the monument, which commemorates Fort Griffin and Shackelford County, stands 14 feet tall and is made of Marble Falls pink granite with three bronze bas-reliefs created by French artists Raoul Josset and Jose Martin.

Josset and Martin were French immigrants who became known in Texas for their dramatic Art Deco style. Their Texas partnership lasted for six years during which time they collaborated on prominent facades and sculptures for Fair Park in Dallas, major museums and public buildings in Houston and Dallas and several other centennial monuments throughout the state. Many of these works are extant and some have been recently restored.

"We're very excited to have this monument restored and placed near the visitor center," said Fort Griffin State Historic Site Manager Mitch Baird. "Here at the fort we have many historic treasures, including the landscape and the state longhorn herd. This memorial adds to the rich heritage and allows visitors to enjoy a mix of history with outdoor adventure."

Restoring the centennial monument at Fort Griffin proved to be a deliberate process, overseen by the THC's Historic Sites Chief Curator Laura DeNormandie-Bass. Conservation Solutions Inc., a Santa Fe-based firm that specializes in

Fort Griffin State Historic Site
1701 N. Hwy. 283, Albany
www.visitfortgriffin.com
Open daily 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

The centennial monument at Fort Griffin was recently restored after being disassembled for more than 40 years.

reassembling and restoring large-scale stone and metal sculpture, did the restoration work.

The Fort Griffin monument was disassembled in 1969 when the bronze plaques were integrated into the entryway for the new visitor center at the historic site. Thankfully, the granite blocks that made up the monument's base did not travel far and were left stacked in a field near the fort for more than 40 years.

For two weeks, Joe Sembrat and his crew moved, cleaned and restored each granite block. Sembrat carefully repaired, washed and waxed the bronze reliefs, restoring the carved eagle, buffalo and settler figures to their original glow.

The centennial monument's original location was near the flagpole on the fort's parade grounds.

Now it rises adjacent to a fort trail and its silhouette greets site visitors as they approach the visitor center.

Fort Griffin offers a complete heritage tourism experience with camping, hiking, fishing, stargazing and living history events. Star parties and astronomy events are held monthly. The fort is also home to some of the official Texas Longhorn Herd.

Over the coming months, the THC will be installing new exhibits in the visitor center and outdoor interpretive panels at the site. The Friends of Fort Griffin plans to restore the powder magazine building. To visit this real place is to experience one of the many real stories unique to Texas. ★

This article was written by Sarah Tober of the THC's Marketing Communications Division.



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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.

County Historical Commission TIPS & TOOLS



At left: Members of the Galveston County Historical Commission, along with residents and friends of the Settlement community, celebrate the nomination of The Settlement Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places.

The following County Historical Commission (CHC) Tips & Tools contain recommendations by Texas Historical Commission (THC) staff to assist preservationists in their efforts to save the real places of Texas. For more information, contact CHC Outreach staff at amy.hammons@thc.state.tx.us or amber.nunez@thc.state.tx.us.

Cultural and historic resource surveys are powerful preservation tools. According to CHC reports submitted in 2009, only 28 percent of Texas counties noted that they had made use of these professional surveys, and even fewer noted that these surveys were updated on a regular basis.

THC programs such as Certified Local Government and Visionaries in Preservation promote cultural and historic resource surveys, but CHCs should also be leaders in this statewide effort to survey Texas. The survey referred to here is the process of identifying and gathering data on historic resources. The depth of documentation can vary, so it's important to know how the information will be used to ensure the appropriate services are

included in the contract with your preservation consultant.

It's also important to learn more about the survey process so you are able to efficiently use your time, energy and funding. Surveys are often dismissed due to expense or importance relative to other community services; however, when used properly, surveying can promote planning that responds to the history and character of your community.

The purpose of cultural and historic resource surveys is to identify and evaluate properties that define the story of your place, thereby illustrating the need to value and retain these resources as your community changes. Survey documentation will provide background on why a particular property is significant, giving decision-makers a better understanding of its role in history.

Subsequent community planning incorporates the tools that allow these significant properties to be maintained or improved in order to retain their historic integrity. These legal and financial tools include easements, tax incentives, historic preservation commissions, preservation ordinances and zoning controls.

For more information on surveys and their use in planning, read the National Park Service's "National Register Bulletin 24" at www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb24. ★



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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 March/April 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 1928 city hall building was one of the last brick depots constructed for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad's western lines.



Answer to the photo from the last issue: Several readers correctly identified Texarkana's Ace of Clubs House. Legend claims the house was built in the shape of the club on the card that original owner James Draughon played

to win a substantial poker pot. Congratulations to the first three readers who submitted the correct answer: Rhonda Leshner of Clarksville, Jorge Serna of Zapata and Steven Wagner of Fort Worth. They will receive prizes from our Texas Heritage Trails Program, the Texas Historical Commission's regional tourism initiative, as a token of our appreciation for taking part in the fun. Thanks to all participants! ★

