



904 Main Street, Bastrop Texas

Bastrop

MUSEUM & VISITOR CENTER

of the Bastrop County Historical Society

Quarterly Newsletter

Spring, 2013

Zoning Change Clears Way for Sale of Old Museum and Creation of New Exhibits

BCHS Trustees have been working for over a year to pave the way for the sale of our old museum building. We voted to sell the building because we did not plan to continue to operate a museum at that location, could not continue the expense and liability of maintaining two buildings, and we needed the proceeds to fund exhibit installation in our new museum.



The 1850 John Cornelison House served as the Bastrop County Museum for 62 years.

Getting a clear title to our property posed several challenges. Multiple surveys of the property did not agree, including two surveys by the same surveyor. We found that a portion of our building was protruding on City property, which was marked as an extension of Austin St and on Main St. A review of old maps and the Bird's Eye View revealed the protrusion occurred as early as 1887. After several negotiation sessions, BCHS agreed to accept the City's survey and the City agreed to vacate that portion of Austin St. and to sell us the portion of the property upon which we protruded, approximately 2,784 square feet for \$5,600. We also agreed to give the City an easement to the river walk.

Zoning posed an additional challenge. In 1991, our property had been marked on the City zoning map as Parkland. The property was not intended to be a park and had been operating as a museum, which falls under Office zoning designation. There are no requirements or regulations outlined for a Parkland designation, so we had no guidance as to how to address development and use issues related our property. The City recommended and requested a zoning change from Parkland to Office. Planning and Zoning passed the ordinance to vacate Austin St. and the zoning change on both properties by a 5-2 vote. The City Council passed it unanimously on the first reading, and by a 4-1 vote on the second reading. The issue was not without controversy. A neighbor was concerned that a change in zoning would negatively affect her property value and a member of P&Z brought up concerns about Historic preservation. Several erroneously assumed that our property was part of the park. It has been private property since the 1880s and our museum since 1952.

We have worked diligently in the past to make certain that the historic part of our former museum, an old house which comprises less than a one-third of the building would be preserved by obtaining three historic designations: National Register of Historic Places, Texas Historic Commission Marker, and the Bastrop Historic Landmark. The local designation has restrictions and significant fines that prohibit demolition or modification of a building to the extent that it no longer meets the historical designation. The portion of our lot that could be built upon is less than a quarter of an acre due to the steep drop off to the river of our lot, in fact, that was the reason we could not expand at our current location. We plan to close on the sale of the property later this month. Our buyer has assured us that he will abide with all ordinances of the City and will uphold all of the preservation designations that exist on the property. It is our understanding that he intends to improve the building, and its use will be in full compliance all city codes and ordinances.

With the sale we will have the funding we need to build out most of our exhibits in the first exhibit gallery in the new museum. Our first exhibit was The Colorado River opening on January 26th. Next we will install El Camino Real by the end of June. It will be followed by a Timeline Exhibit, the Lost Pines Exhibit and a combination Baron de Bastrop/Stephen F. Austin Exhibit which we hope to have in place by the end of this year. We will need to continue to raise funds and will be looking for exhibit sponsors for Historic Homes, Settlers, Fight for Independence, Cotton, Cattle, Coal, World War II/Camp Swift exhibits to be installed next year in the Maynard room. ★

Visitor Center to Feature Digital Signage



The Visitor Center digital sign will support our efforts in promoting tourism in Bastrop.

In working closely with the City's IT Department, the Visitor Center is set to trial a new service to enable digital signage in front of our new museum and visitor center. During this 60-day trial period, visitor center staff will develop presentations to promote Bastrop and to publicize upcoming events. The monitor also allows for a scrolling list of BCHS Business Members.

FourWinds, our vendor, has 300 clients playing on 100,000 displays around the world including the Courtyard Marriott, Apache Oil, plus many airports and universities.

What we can learn to do will propel us into a new realm of communications at our new facility. Furthermore, BCHS can take pride in being the first local organization outside City Hall to be running the digital signage. ★

In Appreciation of Your Gifts and Support

- **Rene Barrientos** - Soil preparation for landscaping at the museum
- **Bastrop Fine Arts Guild** - 1980s "Union Hall" Sign
- **Chris Cartwright** - Candelabra for future Historic Homes exhibit
- **Faye and John Cobb** - Laser printer and lady's suit from WWII era
- **Carolyn Ferguson** - Photograph album from the 1800s Carolyn also donated a copy of *In the Shadow of the Lost Pines* and a letter.
- **Bill and Pat Crawford** - 28 one-sided Victrola phonograph records
- **Frontier Bank** - Bastrop, Texas flag
- **Jan Hinken** - 1953 General Highway map of Bastrop County
- **Curtis Hodge** - *Texas Gold Study*
- **Ken Kesselus** - History of First Baptist Church, Elgin; special county election voters in 1870; eligible county voters in 1867; Regulations of Texas Military Institute in Bastrop; book entitled *C&C Cotton Calculator*
- **Lost Pines Art Bazaar** - Loan of three Persian rugs
- **Morten Family** - *The Men and Women in World War II from Bastrop County*, military memorabilia and photo of Randle, Davidson and Simmons family (presented by Natalie and Ruben Torres).
- **Becky Pardue** - Step on bus tour guide March 13
- **Tom Phillips** - United States Flag with 45 stars
- **Steve Rivers** - Saddle blanket
- **Patrick M. Reilly** - Information relative to Sidney Gordon Adcock of Bastrop who was a recipient of a WWII Purple Heart
- **Audrey Rother** - 50th McDade Watermelon Festival Program from 1988
- **Robbie and Terry Sanders** - Antique Victorian lamp
- **Carl Spooner** - Fire Chief badge
- **Senator Kirk Watson** - Texas State flag
- **Jason Witherspoon** - Tower Theatre honor roll cards, a James Novak trading card, a 1982 Smithville Jamboree pin and four Rockne tokens (presented to the museum by Tamra Perreault) ★

NEW MEMBERS

Dee and Harley Bristol
Kathy Cheshire
Mickey and Marty Duvall
Cheryl and Harry Green
Mike and Jill Green
Carmen Klaerner
Warren and Adena Lewis
Leslie Rangel
Patricia Reid
Rick and Cathy Stryker
Micky Turner
Patty Wedding

RENEWALS

Michelle Adams
Joe and Nancy Beal
Bill Brooks
John and Faye Cobb
Geoff Connor
Lisa Dougherty
Betty Dunkerley
John Eaton
Gayle Foster
Mike and Jan Goebel
Neil and Betty Gurwitz
Terry Hamm
Camilla Hardee
Mike and Jean Helmick
Dolores Hestdalen
Lorelle Hoffman Jacobs
Bobby and Stephanie Jenkins
Marjorie Johnson
Sandra Chipley and Chuck Kellogg
Charles and Marilyn Kuhn
Curtis and Jamie McDonald
Burt and Becky Pardue
Adlinie Rathman
Dusty and Sonya Rhodes
Suzanne Sanders
Tom and Nancy Scott
Edward Shell
Judy Sien
Bubba and Donna Snowden
John and Liza Thrift
Minifred Trigg
Rod and Catherine Turner
Bernice Whitten
A. J. and Norma Woehl

Our First Exhibit

On January 26, a crowd of approximately 300 people were on hand for the Ribbon Cutting for the new Museum and Visitor Center and for the Historical Society's first exhibit, The Colorado River. This first-class exhibit focuses on the river and its contribution to Bastrop's history, economy, and recreation.

Funding for the exhibit was provided, in part, by a grant from the Community Development Partnership Program of the Lower Colorado River Authority. The LCRA granted \$25,000 toward the project, which had a total project cost of \$42,000. The remaining funds were provided through the generosity of individuals and businesses. LCRA also provided photographs and film of historic floods for use in a new educational video which is a major feature of the exhibit.

The new exhibit compliments the City of Bastrop's efforts to focus on the River and invites visitors to complete their river experience by taking a stroll on the June Pape River Walk which is located immediately behind the museum.

Stop by the new gift shop in the Visitor Center at 904 Main St. The gift shop is selling two beautiful, informative books which feature the River: *Born of the River* by Turk Pipkin, which sells for \$25 and *River of Contrasts, The Texas Colorado* by Margie Crisp, which sells for \$29. ★



Special Thanks



The Historical Society thanks all who participated in our grand opening January 26. Special thanks to the Bastrop Masonic Lodge for conducting the laying of the cornerstone ceremony, to Susan Wendel of the Bastrop Chamber of Commerce for coordinating the ribbon cutting ceremony, to the Kerr Center for bringing chairs and to our volunteers. We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to the City of Bastrop. ★

Member of the Month

Bastrop Lawn Care
Bluebonnet Electric Coop
David Bragg, Attorney at Law
City of Bastrop
Eagle Pest Control
Edward Jones Investments
First National Bank
Frontier Bank of Texas
IHS Landscaping Services
Jay Moose Custom Homes
Tonya Kibby Photography
Lone Star Storage
Maxine's Cafe
Osborn Plumbing
Runkle's Custom Pools and Spas
Synergy
The Dentists
TSO Bastrop
Wildflowers & Weeds Landscapes

Hero Member

Benny Boyd Bastrop
Covert Chevrolet Buick GMC
G & C Printing and Forms
Grant Architecture
Hyatt Regency Lost Pine Resort and Spa
Will Jenkins, Attorney at Law
Medack & Oltmann, LLP
Janis Penick, RE/MAX Bastrop Area
L. Wayne Ross, D.D.S.
Joe Grady Tuck, Attorney at Law
Wright Distributing Company, Inc.
L.C. Wright Land & Cattle Company, Ltd

Champion Member

Bastrop Copier
Deep in the Heart Art Foundry
James B. Kershaw, Attorney at Law
Lee Farms, Doris Kershaw
Dr. and Mrs. Sammy Lerma III
Zia Lowe, RE/MAX Bastrop Area
V. Piper, Attorney at Law, P.C.
Roscoe State Bank
Sac-N-Pac/KFC
State Farm Insurance, Lori Tuggle
Taylor Family Chiropractic
Law Office of Derek Van Gilder

BASTROP COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OFFICERS: Libby Sartain, President; Sandra Chipley, Vice President; Jane Wright, Treasurer; Barbara Vana, Secretary
TRUSTEES: Lee Ann Calaway, Sandra Chipley, Lisa Dougherty, Betty Dunkerley, Neil Gurwitz, Bill Haschke, Dan Hays-Clark, Mike Helmick, Frank Huffman, Mary McMurrey, Robbie Sanders, Libby Sartain, Nancy Scott, Jane Wright
SPECIAL ADVISORS: Marvin Beck, Bill Ennis, Tom Phillips, Mark Rose, Suzanne Sanders, Tom Scott
SOCIETY STAFF: Barbara Vana, Administrator; Carol Kysar, Archivist/Curator; Cindye Wolford, VC Director
VOLUNTEERS: Dee Bristol, Belinda Goertz, Rick Gullikson, Margaret Lisle, Pat Muller, Ann Tankersley, Minifred Trigg, Shauna Wells, A.J. Woehl



Thursday, April 25, 2013 at 7 pm

(Refreshments at 6:30 pm)

Bluebonnet Headquarters

650 Highway 21 East, Bastrop, Texas

The Life and Death of Davy Crockett

Join us at the next BCHS Quarterly Meeting, Thursday, April 25, 2013, at Bluebonnet Headquarters. Our speaker, William (Bill) Gronemann III, the author of *David Crockett, Hero of the Common Man*, will discuss interesting aspects of the life and death of David Crockett. Come and hear about the myths and realities surrounding Texas' legendary hero from a long-time student of the Battle of the Alamo, who has written a number of books and articles exploring its history and the questions surrounding the death of Crockett.

William Gronemann III was born and raised in New York City. He is a former member of the New York City Fire Department having served in the ranks of Firefighter, Fire Marshal, Lieutenant, and Captain. He responded to the World Trade Center, on September 11, 2001, while off-duty, arriving with his men from Engine Company 308 about 1½ hours after the towers collapsed. He retired in February 2002 after a 25-year career.

Among his other books include *Death of a Legend, Eyewitness to the Alamo – Revised Edition*, and the most recently published, *September 11: A Memoir*. He is a member (and former board member) of the Western Writers of America, a member of the Alamo Society, and also a member of the John Steinbeck Society. ★

BASTROP COUNTY QUILT SHOW. Be sure to come to the new Museum and Visitor Center to during YESTERFEST, Saturday, April 27 for our first annual Bastrop County Quilt Show!

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904 Main Street

Bastrop, Texas 78602

512.303.0057

BastropMuseumandVisitorCenter.com

JOIN US FOR THE NEXT BCHS QUARTERLY MEETING APRIL 25, 7 PM AT BLUEBONNET ELECTRIC COOP.