



The Heritage Society  
at Sam Houston Park

# 2006/2007 ANNUAL REPORT

**THE PURPOSE OF THE HERITAGE SOCIETY IS TO PRESERVE THE COMPLETE HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITY AND REGION THROUGH PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES, EXHIBITION OF HISTORICAL ARTIFACTS, AND PRESENTATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS WHICH FOCUS ON HOUSTON AND HARRIS COUNTY'S DIVERSE PAST, AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE PRESENT AND FUTURE.**

1100 Bagby  
Houston, Texas 77002  
713-655-1912  
[www.heritagesociety.org](http://www.heritagesociety.org)

*The Heritage Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.*

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

The Heritage Society (THS) offers a wide variety of educational programming ranging from children's school tours to its lunchtime Hill/Finger Lecture Series. The Heritage Society's educational offerings are driven by the principal that through learning of our shared past, the community can build a shared future. A unique setting offers visitors a hands-on experience where history comes alive to impart its story.

**Docent Guided Historic Structure and Museum Tours** – Led by well-trained volunteers and staff members, the number of tour and museum visitors in 2006/2007 totaled 10,554, a 16.7% increase over the prior year. In addition to local and regional visitors, The Heritage Society conducted tours for convention attendees, international students, consular groups, and tourists from England, South Africa, Russia, France, Germany, Viet Nam, Italy, The Netherlands, Australia, Denmark, Guatemala, Switzerland, El Salvador, Mexico, Canada, Norway, Scotland, Austria, and Japan.

**John McGovern Heritage Tours for Children** – Through a partnership with the John P. McGovern Foundation, free tours were provided to 1,445 students and their teachers. Younger children viewed *What In the World Is This?*, an interactive video about pioneer life in Texas. They were challenged to identify old fashioned objects such as churns, washboards, oil lamps and toys, and to understand how the objects were used in daily life. The next stop on their tour was the Duncan Store, a replica of an actual general store in Egypt, Texas, which shows a variety of late 19<sup>th</sup> century merchandise. The Duncan Store is an interactive



teaching area where students can both see and touch. The tour proceeded to Old Place, an 1823 pioneer cabin thought to be the oldest existing structure in Harris County. It is furnished to show how early settlers lived on the Texas frontier and serves as an interactive venue featuring many of the objects seen in *What In the World Is This?* The children then visit Yates House, built in 1870 by the Reverend Jack Yates, a former slave who settled in Houston in the late 1860s. By visiting this structure, children learn about the educational, religious and economic opportunities available to post-Civil War African Americans. The last stop on the tour is St. John Church, built in 1891 by German immigrants, where students explored the significance of immigration and rural life in Texas. Older students also visited the 1905 Staiti House which gave them the opportunity to compare and contrast 19<sup>th</sup> century pioneer life with early 20<sup>th</sup> century lifestyles.

**Traveling Trunk Shows** – Sixteen traveling trunk shows introduced children to Houston and Texas history through presentations at public libraries, local schools, and Scout day camps. The trunk shows demonstrated some of the same kinds of objects that children who visit The Heritage Society would see on a tour. Costumed volunteers entertain and delight children with stories about pioneer life, dress, and play.

**Adult Community Outreach** – Groups of people that are not able to personally visit the park experience Houston's history through The Heritage Society's adult outreach programs. During the 2006/2007 program year, more than 400 individuals enjoyed one of our traveling programs including *Steeple and Stained Glass*, *Sam and Margaret*, *170 Years of Houston History* and *Families of the Park*. The outreach programs feature information about Texas and Houston history, biographies, lifestyles and local traditions.

**Heritage Family Days** – Over 325 visitors Family Days in FY2006/2007. Family Days learn about history. *Passport Through Time*, and their families the opportunity to travel Houston by "meeting" three of the women structures– Zerviah Noble, an early private Cherry – a local artist and arts educator; and independent oilman, Henry Staiti. *Time* on November 12, 2006, offered families through demonstrations and craft activities. Additionally, families learned about how baseball was played in the 1860s through an exhibition "base ball" game played between the Montgomery College Saw Dogs and the Richmond Giants. *That's Entertainment – Past and Present*, held on February 11, 2007, helped children and families experience traditional African and African American folktales and songs as presented by storyteller Kathy Culmer. Modern day dance steps



participated in three child-friendly Heritage offer free, fun opportunities for children to held on September 10, 2006, gave children through time to learn about life in early who lived in The Heritage Society's historic and public school teacher; Emma Richardson Odelia Staiti – arts patron and wife of *Honored Traditions: Dolls & Dugouts*, held insight into the art of original doll-making

were demonstrated by the Galilee Missionary Baptist Church Tiny Tots Drill Team. After viewing early 20<sup>th</sup> century African American vintage film posters that were on exhibit in the Museum Gallery, children were invited to design their own original posters.

**Hill/Finger Noontime Lecture Series** – Funded by William J. Hill and the Nanette and Jerry Finger Foundation, this free lunchtime series offered interesting and educational lectures on a variety of Houston and Texas related topics. Over 323 people took advantage of Thursday noontime lectures, held on the third Thursday of each month in The Heritage Society Tea Room. Topics in FY 2006/2007 included: “It’s All About Time” (Ralph Pokluda), “Rediscovering Houston” (Story Sloane), “Restoration of Byrd’s Department Store” (Bob Fretz, Jr.), “Echoes from Women of the Alamo” (Gale Shiffrin), “Art Dolls are a Whole Different Animal” (Pepper Hume), “Famous Oil Families of Texas” (Sylvia Thompson), “Bolivar Plantation” (J.D. Bartell), “Texas Rangers Then and Now” (Robert Utley), “Passionate Nation” (James Haley), “Contemplating Beauties Within: Maps as Art at the General Land Office” (Robert Jones), and “Historic Records Preservation” (Charles Bacarisse).



**Texas History Teachers Workshop** – FY2006/2007 marked the initial planning and organization of a professional development workshop for History teachers. The workshop is designed to integrate aspects of Houston history into the state approved Texas History curriculum for middle school teachers. Scheduled to take place on Saturday, September 29, 2007, the workshop will accommodate fifty teachers and provide participants with lesson plans, visual aids and primary resources from The Heritage Society’s collections for use in their classrooms. The Heritage Society will award 6 hours of professional development credit in Texas History for participation in the workshop and has received approval from the

Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented to allow teachers to count six hours of credit toward the TAGT Awareness Certificate. The workshop committee is comprised of veteran teachers and volunteers who have planned an outstanding opportunity for area middle school Texas History teachers.

### COLLECTIONS

The Heritage Society’s permanent collection houses over 20,000 regional items, each carefully preserved and used to tell the story of Houston and its place in Texas history. In 2006/2007, the Collections Department accessioned a number of relevant objects into the permanent collection. Items pertaining to the Port of Houston, Houston businesses, the 1900 Galveston storm and Camp Logan were among those added to the archives.



Essential to the support of THS’ mission is the continued preservation and maintenance of these artifacts. Curatorial and Registration staff focused efforts on updating and improving collections management policies and procedures in order to promote preventive conservation. Areas of emphasis included:

- Assessment and updating of The Heritage Society’s offsite Collections storage facility including the addition of ultraviolet radiation filtering sleeves on all critical lighting areas.
- Assessment of environmental monitoring equipment and practices for maintaining a stable environment in the structures housing THS’ collections. In the next year, The Heritage Society plans to replace the hydro thermograph systems, used to monitor temperature and humidity in the structures, with newer, more accurate data loggers. Information gathered by the data loggers can be downloaded directly into a computer program designed to map changes in temperature and humidity within the structures. This will allow the Registration staff to more accurately assess the environmental challenges facing each structure and provide them with the tools and information to generate more specific conservation plans to address the particular needs of each building.
- Preservation of information through digitizing historic manuscripts, photographs, drawings, maps and other historic documents. Long-term plans include making these one-of-a-kind fragile collection items available online for reference and education of the community.

### PRESERVATION

On February 7, 2007, Sam Houston Park, Houston's first and oldest municipal park, received special designation as a Protected Landmark by the Houston City Council. The preservation safeguards imposed by the Protected Landmark



designation help to ensure that the park and its history remain available to the public for many years to come. Founded in 1899, Sam Houston Park has served as the site of one of Houston's first public schools as well as the city's first zoo. Maintained by City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Sam Houston Park remains an important present-day reminder of Houston's rich and complex history.

The Heritage Society maintains another City of Houston Protected Landmark - the 1847 Kellum-Noble House. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Kellum-Noble House is Houston's oldest standing brick structure on its original foundation and is located on the south-most portion of Sam Houston Park.

Foundation movement has been identified with regard to the Kellum-Noble House. Continued movement and moisture penetration require that The Heritage Society take measures to provide stabilization of the structure. Sparks Engineering, Inc. of Round Rock, Texas, has been contracted to conduct observation and analysis of foundation movement at the site. Major construction in the immediate area, such as the Heritage Plaza multi-story garage adjacent to the property is scheduled to begin in late 2007. The Heritage Society Board of Directors, under the guidance of historical preservationist and Board member Anna Mod, is working closely with Executive Director Alice Collette to develop a long-term conservation plan for Kellum-Noble House. Phase I of the monitoring is nearing completion and plans for Phase II are already underway. Phase II monitoring will involve the digging of test pits around the house in order to observe foundation movement and visually inspect the foundation's structural integrity.

In 2006/2007, restoration work was completed on the western elevation of the 1905 Staiti House. The structure's western exposure demonstrated the greatest need for attention. In particular, past roof leaks had posed a considerable threat to structural elements behind the building's siding. Fretz Construction performed restoration and repairs to Staiti House. Compromised structural support elements within the building's walls were replaced. Deteriorating exterior siding was removed and painstakingly re-milled to match the original faux masonry on the building's façade. The intricate beaded ceiling located underneath the building's soffits was also re-milled and replaced. The remaining three elevations of Staiti House will undergo restoration in 2007/2008.



## EXHIBITIONS

The Heritage Society's exhibition schedule has continued to expand, offering a variety of fascinating programming to visitors. In 2006/2007, four outstanding exhibits were available free of charge to museum guests. Each exhibit examined different aspects of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century culture and its impact on Houston history.



- **It's All About Time** (July 5 – October 22, 2007) was the opening exhibit for 2006/2007. It included clocks from THS collections and numerous local collectors. Over 80 clocks were showcased – dating from as early as 1720. A 400 day chrome plated clock circa 1937 and a 1950s advertising clock were also featured in the exhibit. Ralph Pokluda, private collector and owner of Chappel Jordan Clocks was the guest curator for the exhibition.

- **A Story to Tell: Dolls from Literature** (October 31, 2006 – January 7, 2007) was a collaborative effort with Texas Association of Original Doll Artists that enthralled children of all ages with re-creations of characters from beloved children's books.



- **The Vintage Years: Movie Posters from the Early Years of Black Film** (January 16 – March 4, 2007) featured



vintage African American movie posters from around the world. Noted collector of African-American movie posters and founder of Separate Cinema, John Kisch, was the featured speaker at the exhibit's opening reception. The exquisite posters, many of them hand-lettered, represented how black cinema grew alongside mainstream cinema during segregation and the eventual merging of the two entertainment forms.

- **Coming to Houston** (March 13 – May 27, 2007) told the story of the migration of different cultures into Houston. Three distinct cultural groups were featured – African Americans, Latinos, and Asians. Their personal journeys and stories of immigration were presented through the perspectives and personal effects of individual family members. Over 2,500 visitors viewed the *Coming to Houston* exhibit. Graduate students from the University of Houston, under the guidance of Dr. Joseph Pratt of the University of Houston, *Houston Review of History and Culture*, worked in collaboration with The Heritage Society to organize and present the exhibition. Dr. Pratt was the guest curator and featured speaker at the opening reception.



### DEVELOPMENT

The 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Candlelight Tour, *A Story to Tell*, created a magical night for several thousand visitors in December, 2006. Children delighted in having their pictures taken with Santa, listening to the story teller, and participating in holiday craft projects with THS volunteers. Choral groups and performers serenaded visitors as they strolled along candlelit paths to tour the historic structures decorated in period holiday fashion. The Heritage Society's annual signature fundraising event, Candlelight Tour 2006 was the most successful ever, raising nearly \$75,000 to fund day to day programming.



Former First Lady Barbara Bush was the highlight of The Heritage Society's 2007 fundraising luncheon, *Reminiscences of Houston.* Mrs. Bush charmed the 300 luncheon attendees with her wonderful humor and wit. At the close of the event, Councilwoman Pam Holm presented Mrs. Bush with a Proclamation from Mayor Bill White and Houston City Council proclaiming March 7, 2007 as Bush Family Heritage Day in honor of the Bush family's contribution to the heritage of the city. The luncheon was held at the historic Rice Hotel's Crystal Ballroom in downtown Houston. Mrs. Bush's presence helped raise awareness for The Heritage Society's mission to preserve Houston's history. *Reminiscences of Houston* raised more than \$125,000 for The Heritage Society's programming.

The Heritage Society is proud to offer visitors free admission to the Museum Gallery. THS exhibitions are an excellent way to showcase both the traditional and unconventional aspects of Houston and Texas history, providing a worthwhile educational experience for guests. The Heritage Society relies on individual giving, public sector, corporate and foundation funding. In 2006/2007 THS re-opened the gift shop with unique items such as collectible Bob Bailey Calendars that feature historic Houston photographs from the 1930s through the 1960s. Marketing of the facilities as a unique venue for special events increased the overall facility usage by 178% over 2005/2006. Tour income has also risen with the increase in the number of tours given over the past year. Through quality programming, broader marketing and innovative partnerships, a sound foundation was established to grow this segment of resource development for The Heritage Society.

### PARTNERSHIPS

THS' primary partnership is with the Houston Parks & Recreation Department (HPARD). HPARD has been instrumental in maintaining park grounds and landscaping that compliment the historic structures. In addition, HPARD Director Joe Turner has worked tirelessly to promote Sam Houston Park as a tourist destination and a place of recreation for citizens and visitors to enjoy. Together, HPARD and THS work closely to ensure that Sam Houston Park provides a safe and enjoyable experience for the public.



houston  
**PARKS**  
& recreation  
department



Another of THS' vital partnerships is with the Mayor's Office of Special Events (MOSE). Every year, the park grounds are made available to a variety of groups and organizations for special events, festivals, parades, and non-profit fundraising activities. The Heritage Society works closely with MOSE to ensure that events in the park run smoothly. As a member of The Heritage Society Advisory Board, MOSE Deputy Director Susan Christian is involved with long range planning for the park itself and for The Heritage Society's historic structures located throughout the grounds.

Volunteers can be found performing a variety of duties and activities around The Heritage Society. Those individuals who dedicate their time and expertise are critical to the success of the organization. Among the most important of these are the volunteer Docents and Museum Guides whose dedication and support span many years. The ambassadors of The Heritage Society, these volunteers go through rigorous training to learn about each historic structure's unique history. Special training sessions are offered with each new Museum Gallery exhibit to ensure that all volunteers are well educated on the items and subject matter presented to the public. By providing information and insight to guests, volunteers help carry out The Heritage Society's mission to educate the public about Houston and Texas history.



In addition to individuals, THS has also hosted many corporate volunteer groups. In 2006/2007, nearly 300 employees of PricewaterhouseCoopers made their way to The Heritage Society to carry out a variety of special projects such as park landscaping, painting, and filing. Smaller groups of volunteers, such as those from Amegy Bank, have participated in a number of THS special events including Candlelight Tour, Family Days and *Reminiscences of Houston*. Volunteers provided 4,350 hours of service in 2006/2007.

### FINANCIAL

In 2006/2007 Heritage Society program year expenditures were \$904,839. Of these expenditures, 72% were program services, 11% were management and 17% were fundraising. Total revenues for 2006/2007 were \$792,856 resulting in a change of net assets of \$113,699. Beginning assets totaled \$2,611,166; ending assets were \$2,501,481. The Heritage Society's Endowment Fund is managed by Northern Trust. The endowment fund was valued at \$2,024,635 as of May 31, 2007. A net investment return of \$282,473 was realized during the 2006/2007 fiscal period. In 2007, The Heritage Society was honored in the large budget category of the Stanford Financial Excellence in the Arts Award. This acknowledgement recognizes excellence in fiscal management by nonprofit organizations. Of particular note was The Heritage Society's fiscal management of funds necessary for the exterior restoration of the 1868 Pillot House.

### LOOKING AHEAD

As The Heritage Society enters 2007/2008, many new and exciting programs and projects are on the horizon. Plans are underway for several improvements to Sam Houston Park including the construction of a wrought iron fence to surround the north section of the park. The fence will provide added security for individuals visiting the park – especially those with small children as well as provide a safer working environment for volunteers and employees of The Heritage Society, HPARD, MOSE, and the numerous organizations that hold events within the park each year. In addition, the fence will facilitate responsible stewardship on the part of THS by providing extra protection to the invaluable historic structures located in Sam Houston Park. HPARD and MOSE have partnered with THS on planning and design of the fence and construction is scheduled to begin in late 2007. The Heritage Society Planning Committee will continue its work to update the Sam Houston Park master plan and to update the organizational long range plan.



Restoration of THS historic structures continues with special focus on the Kellum-Noble and Staiti houses. Continued monitoring is required to assess the conditions of both of the structures and work is needed to ensure that these buildings remain open and accessible to the public. In particular, restoration of the north, east and south elevations of Staiti House will be completed, including replication and restoration of the structure's original front porch balustrade. As a responsible steward of these historic treasures and as an AAM accredited institution, appropriate measures must be taken to identify necessary action and to secure the appropriate contractors for all restoration, repair and maintenance tasks.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2006/2007**

### *Officers/Executive Committee:*

<i>President</i>	William J. Hill
<i>Secretary/Parliamentarian</i>	Janiece M. Longoria
<i>Treasurer</i>	H. Richard Walton
<i>Vice President, Buildings</i>	Anna Mod
<i>Vice President, Collections</i>	Betty Cabaniss
<i>Vice President, Development</i>	Cy Clark
<i>Vice President, Education</i>	Evelyn Boatwright
<i>Vice President, Nominating</i>	Jerry Finger
<i>Vice President, Planning</i>	Howard Heald
<i>Volunteer Chair</i>	Joanne Zumbrun

### *Members:*

Michael Brown	Harriet C. Latimer
Jane Ellen Cable	Steve Lucchesi
Doris Cantrell	Carol McDavid
Janet Casstevens	Gail Rosenthal
Alice Collette	Carolyn Roth
James Furr	Ruth M. Smith
James L. Goettee, Jr.	Nelle Spates
Catherine C. Hevrdejs	Joseph Tornberg
Sibley Kopmeier-Havlick	Joe Turner

## **ADVISORY BOARD 2006/2007**

J.D. Bartell	El Franco Lee
Jane B. Block	Frank Medina
George Buenik	Ralph Pokluda
Susan Christian	Julie Sudduth
Sylvia Clauder	Bart Truxillo
Pam Holm	Molly L. Whitaker
Ciro Jimenez	

## **KEY STAFF 2006/2007**

<i>Executive Director</i>	Alice Collette
<i>Communications Director</i>	Deborah Duty
<i>Curator of Collections</i>	Wallace Saage
<i>Education Coordinator</i>	Elizabeth Martin
<i>Exhibits Coordinator</i>	Ginger Berni
<i>Finance Director</i>	Peggy Horn
<i>Registrar</i>	Laney McAdow

