



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **JUNE 1, 2015–MAY 31, 2016**

## **MISSION**

The Heritage Society (THS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to tell the stories of Houston's diverse history through collections, exhibits, and educational programs. Ten preserved historic buildings furnished in the styles of their respective eras, a bandstand, and a museum gallery with rotating exhibitions are operated by The Heritage Society in Sam Houston Park at the western edge of downtown Houston. Collections consisting of furnishings, paintings and photographs, textiles, historical documents and artifacts, exhibits, tours, lectures, workshops, and outreach programs tell the stories of Houston from the 1820s to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond.

## **ATTENDANCE**

In 2015/2016, 15,535 people toured THS's historic buildings and museum gallery. An additional 232,603 visitors came to Sam Houston Park for festivals, charitable and athletic events, and civic celebrations during the year. Sixty-seven percent of visitors were from the Greater Houston area and the remaining 33% of THS visitors were tourists. Twenty-five percent of all visitors were children ages 18 years or younger; 64% were adults ages 19 to 64; and 11% were seniors ages 65 and older. Visitors were 58% White, 20% Latino, 12% African-American, 7% Asian, and 3% other ethnicities or multiracial.



## EXHIBITIONS

### ***THROUGHOUT! Houston's GLBT History***

(June 2 through September 19, 2015)



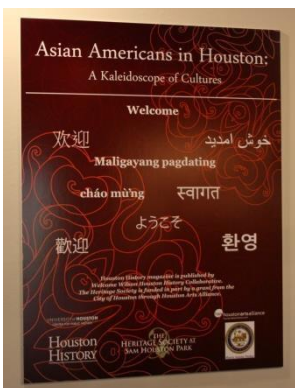
Organized in partnership with Gulf Coast Archive and Museum of GLBT History, the exhibit offered a comprehensive look at Houston's GLBT history. An exhibit advisory committee was formed to help define exhibit components, review and refine planned content, and suggest additional content and activities. The sixteen-member committee met for seven months, providing valuable advice and suggestions, including the proposal that the exhibit be named *THROUGHOUT! Houston's GLBT History* to better describe the stories the exhibit would tell about the community's history. A wide selection of artifacts, including photographs, periodicals, and costumes, were included in the exhibit to help promote an understanding of GLBT culture in

Houston. A companion exhibit of artworks created by local GLBT artists was presented in The Heritage Society Tea Room. The companion exhibit included works by artists who were lost to the AIDS epidemic.

### ***Houston History Wall***

(September 2015 through September 2016)

This exhibit begins with the founding of Houston by the Allen Brothers in 1836 and continues through a timeline of events in Houston up to the founding of NASA. The display features early maps of the city and has exhibit cases housing artifacts and documents related to the city's history such as glass mugs from the "Domeskellar," a restaurant in the Astrodome and a City Directory from 1890. The *Houston History Wall* also incorporates video components in an effort to engage the visitor and broaden their knowledge of Houston's history.



### ***Asian Americans in Houston: A Kaleidoscope of Cultures***

(October 1, 2015 through January 16, 2016)

The Heritage Society partnered with *Houston History* magazine to present *Asian Americans in Houston: A Kaleidoscope of Cultures*, an exhibit that brought the magazine's Fall, 2015 issue to life and celebrated the many contributions of Asian American Houstonians to our city and its culture. Topics included an overview of Asian immigration, a Buddhist temple, and stories of Houstonians who traced their ancestry to China, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, and South Asia. The museum exhibit featured artifacts, photographs, and documents representing a cultural bridge between Asian and Houstonian.

### ***Vaquero: Genesis of the Texas Cowboy***

(January 27 through March 5, 2016)

This exhibition was created by the Wittliff Collections at the Alkek Library, Texas State University-San Marcos, and presented in partnership with Humanities Texas. In the early 1970s photographer Bill Wittliff had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit a ranch in northern Mexico where the vaqueros still worked cattle in traditional ways. He photographed the vaqueros as they went about daily chores that had changed little since the first Mexican cow herders learned to work cattle from a horse's back. The exhibition featured photographs with bilingual narrative text that revealed the muscle, sweat and drama that went into roping a calf in thick brush or breaking a wild horse in the saddle.



### ***Profile of a Houston Oil Family: Photographs from the Staiti/Reisner Family Collection***

(March 16 through July 2, 2016)

On January 10, 1901, the Lucas gusher ushered in the Spindletop oil boom that changed the course of the world's history. Many well-known companies, such as Humble Oil, developed as a result of this early twentieth century oil boom, but many more independent men were also successfully bringing in gushers throughout Texas. One of



those men was Henry Staiti. This exhibit featured approximately 50 photographs taken by Staiti family members and professional photographers in the 1910s through the 1930s. The types of photographs included many sweeping panoramic shots of oil fields. Beautiful images of their extensive gardens and interior views of their home illustrate the lifestyle afforded to the Staitis as a result of Henry's success in the burgeoning oil industry. *Profile of a Houston Oil Family* also

featured letters and documents relating to Henry's oil dealings and even home movies taken in the late 1920s of the Staiti family.

### ***Emma Richardson Cherry Studio at the Nichols-Rice-Cherry House***

(June 2015 – June 2017)

One of The Heritage Society's historic houses was first saved by Emma Richardson Cherry in 1899. Nichols-Rice-Cherry House was originally built in 1850 and is largely interpreted to this time period but one room of the house has been transformed into Mrs. Cherry's art studio where several of her paintings, art supplies, sketches, and photographs are on display.



The Heritage Society presents regular mini-exhibits of photos, documents, and items related to a variety of subjects in the rotunda display cases in Houston's historic City Hall, located across the street from Sam Houston Park. During 2015 the following mini-exhibits were on view for City Hall visitors:



## ***What's Cooking? Antique Cookbooks and Kitchen Gadgets***

(June 22 through September 30, 2015)

This display highlighted the many gadgets found in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century kitchen. Examples of new electric devices like blenders and toasters were exhibited with classics like glass mason jars and wooden rolling pins. Several late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century cookbooks from The Heritage Society's permanent collection complemented the display.

## ***No-Tsu-oH: Houston's Forgotten Festival***

(October 5, 2015 through May 31, 2016)

This display featured invitations, souvenirs, costumes, and photographs from the years that Houston celebrated its industry with a No-Tsu-oH (Houston spelled backwards) carnival. The celebration included numerous parades and balls and was organized by city leaders and society women each year from 1899 – 1915.



## **PRESERVATION**

Regular maintenance on the historic buildings continued through the 2015/2016 program year, including HVAC repairs, and maintenance, carpentry and roof repairs, pest management, and other minor repairs where needed.

Work to stabilize the foundation of the **1847 Kellum-Noble House** continued throughout the 2015/2016 fiscal year. Interior plaster repair and paint were completed using colors found on plaster chips during archeological excavation and on interior surfaces during other repairs. Electrical connections were re-routed underground and a new HVAC system with thermostat and humidistat was installed upstairs, and storm drainage on the site was improved. After visiting the site to monitor construction progress, the structural engineer strongly recommended replacing the second-floor porch and columns, constructed in the 1950s, due to expansion of the steel framing causing cracking on the exterior walls of the building. The necessary replacement of the porch, columns, and roof covering provided THS with an opportunity to restore the building to the time of the Noble family, who lived in the home from 1851 to 1899.



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The restoration is based on a c. 1890 photograph, the earliest known significant documentation of the building and the only known photograph that depicts the building as a residence, before the City of Houston purchased it in 1899. The photograph depicts, among other differences, columns that are more numerous and configured differently than the existing columns and a standing-seam metal roof with a half-round gutter. Additional minor differences depicted in the photograph will also be incorporated into the restoration. Preliminary design drawings for the exterior restoration were completed and approved by the Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission and the Texas Historical Commission. By the end of the 2015/2016 program year, installation of the new standing-seam metal roof was in progress.

New fire-treated cedar shingles were installed on the **1891 St. John Church** roof in March 2015. Peak Roofing installed new fire-treated cedar shingles over the existing sheathing, replaced sheathing where necessary, and repaired the soffit and fascia. The new roof covering successfully eliminated water leaks in the building.



In Fall 2015, the **Museum Gallery** was reconfigured to improve wayfinding and enhance our visitors' experience. The visitor check-in desk and gift shop were relocated to the center of the Museum Gallery and aligned with the entrance doors. A new desk, display case, and retail shelving were purchased. The new configuration also allowed for expanded gift shop inventory and separation between the permanent Houston History exhibit and temporary rotating exhibits.



## COLLECTIONS

The Heritage Society's collections include over 23,000 items carefully preserved and used to tell the stories of Houston and Houston's place in Texas History. A few of the items added to the collections during 2015/2016 are featured below.



Textiles belonging to descendants of Sidney Sherman (1805-1873), hero of the Battle of San Jacinto and the Texas Revolution, were accepted into The Heritage Society's permanent collection in September, 2015. Lucy Brady was the granddaughter of Sidney Sherman and twins, Lennie and Lucy Hunt, were his great-granddaughters. These textiles have excellent provenance, remaining within the family for generations and donated to The Heritage Society by a Sherman descendant, Cate Pond. Sidney Sherman fought



at the battle of San Jacinto and is credited with the phrase "Remember the Alamo." The collection includes a dress, circa 1910, and a nightgown and lace collar, circa 1890 that belonged to Lucy Brady; two baby bonnets dated 1906 and a child's dress, circa 1915 that belonged to twins, Lennie and Lucy Hunt; and hats from Battelstein's and Foley's Bros, circa 1940, that belonged to Lucy Hunt. Pictured at left is Lucy Brady's c. 1910 dress.



In November, 2015, Lauri Jackson, a Staiti family descendant, donated four family portraits to The Heritage Society's collection. Portraits of Henry Staiti and his wife, Odelia Reisner Staiti, along with portraits of Odelia's parents, Charles and Natalie Reisner, will be permanently displayed in the 1905 Staiti House and join other Staiti and Reisner family artifacts, portraits, and photographs.

An Emma Richardson Cherry painting was accepted into The Heritage Society's collection in December, 2015. Donated by Wade Mayberry, the c. 1920s portrait is of Mrs. Cherry's daughter, Dorothy Reid. It is a fine example of her work and it was exhibited in 2013 in the Houston Public Library's Julia Ideson building. The portrait will join others by Mrs. Cherry in her studio in The Heritage Society's 1850 Nichols-Rice-Cherry House.

Donated by Lalo Bruhl in January, 2016, was the 1923 book, *The Art of Color* by Michel Jacobs. Published by Doubleday, Page & Company, the front page bears the



signatures of the author and Emma Richardson Cherry. Mrs. Cherry assumed Michel Jacobs' duties at the Metropolitan Art School, for a few months during 1923.

In March, 2016, Jane Emerson donated a painting of magnolia flowers by Emma Richardson Cherry. Believed to have been painted in the 1930s or 1940s, the piece belonged to the donor's sister who had intended to donate it to The Heritage Society. When her sister passed away, Ms. Emerson carried out her sister's wish that the painting become part of THS's collection of Mrs. Cherry's works.

This beautiful oak ice box came out of the home of Dr. A.M. Autrey who lived at 2708 Bagby Street in Houston. As a physician for nearly 50 years, Dr. Autrey was known for his interest in providing health care to the less fortunate. Many of his medical instruments and books are now held in the collections of the University of Texas Medical School at Galveston and Houston Academy of Medicine Texas Medical Center Library. Donated by Nancy Law in March, 2016, along with numerous other items having belonged to Dr. Autrey, the ice box is now on display in the Duncan General Store.



This unusual china bowl marked "R.S. Prussia" was used in the home of Camille Pillot for many years. Donated to The Heritage Society by Mary Alice Roberts in March, 2016, the bowl remains in excellent condition and will be displayed in Camille Pillot's childhood home, the 1868 Pillot House. Camille Gabriel Pillot was a son of Zeolide and Eugene Pillot and went to work in 1882 as a bookkeeper for Henry Henke's grocery business. He became a partner in the business, which was renamed Henke & Pillot, and is now a part of Kroger's. Camille was involved in other businesses as well and was financially very successful. He built a large home next door to his parents' home on McKinney.

In May, 2016, an exceptional oil painting by Emma Richardson Cherry, *Portrait of Hazel French* came into the permanent collection through the French Robertson's grandson. Mrs. French Robertson was a co-founder of the Houston Symphony organization's Executive Board and a founder of the Garden Club Players, an early amateur theatrical group. The painting is a wonderful portraiture and will join the exhibit of House.



painting by Emma Richardson Robertson, came into the kindness of Peter Brown, Hazel Robertson was a co-founder of the sponsor of the Houston Symphony organization's Executive Board was a founder of the Garden Club Players, an early amateur theatrical example of Mrs. Cherry's her works in Nichols-Rice-Cherry



## TOURS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS

The Heritage Society operates ten historic buildings in Sam Houston Park that are available for in-depth, docent-guided tours at specified times. The buildings tell the stories of Houston's past, from the settlers who received land grants from Stephen F. Austin to the Gulf Coast oil boom in the early 20th century.

During 2015/2016, free or reduced-price tours were provided to 1,433 students and their chaperones thanks to the generosity of the John P. McGovern Foundation. Tours for elementary students involved viewing an interactive video about pioneer life and visiting the Duncan Store, Old Place, Staiti House, and St. John Church. Children were challenged to compare and contrast pioneer life with early 20<sup>th</sup> century lifestyles as they toured these historic buildings and exhibits. Large school groups often come on multiple days and in addition to historic building tours, participate in other educational activities such as scavenger hunts in the park or visits to nearby libraries. Tours for middle school, high school and college level students are tailored to their focus of study.



Some of the student groups that toured The Heritage Society during 2015/2016 included Mark Twain Elementary School, Herod Elementary School, Roosevelt Elementary School, Windsor Village Elementary School, Clay Road Baptist School, Sugar Grove Christian School, New Heights Christian Academy, Veritas Christian Academy, First Baptist Academy, St. John Paul II Catholic School, St. Rose of Lima Catholic School, St. John's School, Kinkaid School, Japan Society exchange students and third grade students from two area elementary schools who are participating in the Caring Aggies Mentoring Program (CAMP). Upper grade level groups included middle school students from Gregory-Lincoln Learning Center, high school students from Deer Park High School and TRIO Upward Bound Program, and college students from Prairie View A&M University Heritage Preservation Class, University of Houston Department of Urban Education, and Stephen F. Austin Interior Design Program.



JAPAN  
AMERICA  
SOCIETY OF  
HOUSTON



Adults visit The Heritage Society for a variety of reasons and tours are customized to their particular interest. Many of the 425 adults who were part of groups during 2015/2016 were tourists and sought information about Houston's cultural heritage. A few of those tourist groups included Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, Texas DAR officers, and members of the Loussiemouth RAF Unit.



Local groups seeking language and cultural training or a continuing education experience during 2015/2016 included Houston Accueil, Ikebana International, Houston Center for Learning, Destination English, Houston Museum of Natural Science volunteers and Houston First Corporation employees. The Heritage Society also conducted a tour for new Houston City Councilmember Amanda Edwards and her staff.

Additionally, outpatients from TIRR Memorial Hermann Challenge Program toured The Heritage Society as a part of their physical rehabilitation program, and teen clients from MHMRA and mentally challenged adults from South Texas Adult Day Treatment Center toured as an enrichment activity.



Family groups often visit as a part of their holiday or family reunion activities. Numerous relatives of Odelia (Mrs. Henry) Staiti visited The Heritage Society in conjunction with the opening of the *Legacy of a Houston Oil Family* exhibit and toured the 1905 Staiti House as well.



The Heritage Society is a popular venue for cultural outings for seniors groups. Many of these groups use Harris County's free precinct buses and make THS one of the stops on their day trips. During 2015/2016, some of the senior groups that visited included Precinct 4's Fun for Seniors Program, Audubon Society Seniors, College Park Baptist Church, Bay Area Welcome

Neighbors, Junior League Transfers, Northwest Women's Club, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, International Friends, Neighbors & Newcomers, New Kentucky DRT Chapter and Crosby Community Center.

For park visitors who don't have time for a docent-guided tour or who come to the park when the tour office is closed, free cell phone audio tours are available. They can dial a number on their cell phones and listen to a brief commentary about each building. During 2015/2016, 2,152 different individuals took the opportunity to learn about Houston's history through The Heritage Society's free cell phone tour program.

## PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES

***Family Fun & Family Memories Heritage Family Day*** was held on Sunday, June 28, 2015 with 54 guests in attendance. The Clayton Genealogy Research Center was on hand to advise those interested in tracing their family histories. Jamie the Magician entertained all with slights of hand. Artist Veronica used her face-painting skills to embellish the faces of



both children and adults. Families enjoyed participating in hopscotch, jump rope, horseshoes, and an old-fashioned game called Graces. Children's craft activities included making a homemade memory game and decorating foam dolls. The 1823 Old Place was open for tours and refreshments were provided in the Duncan Store.



***Asian Heritage Family Day*** was held on Sunday, October 4, 2015 with 129 guests celebrating the diversity of Asian cultures in Houston. Dance of Asian America Dance Company performed traditional Chinese folk dances. Staff from Japan Society of America and the Consulate General of Japan in Houston hosted an origami activity table that celebrated the Japanese autumn tradition of moon viewing, Otsukimi, and the



Japanese folk tale, Rabbit in the Moon.

Other

hands-on craft activities included making Chinese lanterns and coloring kid-friendly Indian mandalas. Both Asian and American refreshments were served in the Duncan General Store. The 1823 Old Place was again open for tours.





### **Texas Cowboy Culture Heritage Family Day**



was held on February 2016. Over 270 guests attended and entertainment was provided by Celtaire String Band. Longhorns Liberty and Justice gave visitors the opportunity to see real Texas longhorns up close. “Clawfoot Rose” brought her miniature chuck wagon to illustrate the cattle trail experience. Refreshments included haystack cookies,



Texas cattle trail mix, campfire beans (chocolate covered raisins) and root beer. Guests toured 1823 Old Place to see how early Texas pioneers lived.

## **WORKSHOPS**

### ***The Best Little Workshop in Texas***

(June 15, 2015)

The Heritage Society held its ninth annual professional development workshop for teachers of 7<sup>th</sup> grade Texas history on Monday, June 15, 2015. There were fifty-one participants representing one private school and 28 public schools in nine local school districts. Speakers included Dr. John Lundberg, Associate Professor of History at Tarrant County Community College South, who gave a presentation on *Six Constitutions Over Texas*; Dr. Sara S. Frear, Assistant Professor of History at Houston Baptist University, who gave a presentation on *Texas in the Progressive Era*; and Dr. Paul Spellman, professor of U.S. and Texas history at Wharton County Community College, who gave a presentation on *Early Anglo Settlement in Texas*. Instructional strategy and resource sessions on each of these topics were presented by local professional educators. Participants received primary resource documents and teaching tools for use in the classroom setting.



## **OUTREACH PROGRAMS**

During 2015/2016, a costumed volunteer presented the Pioneer Trunk Show to 1,812 children and adults at seven locations. The trunk shows were presented at Garden Oaks Elementary, Trent Internationale, Fielder Elementary, St. John’s School (Colonial Days), St. John’s School (2nd grade), Educators Open House at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, and the City of Houston’s Water Week Festival.

THS staff members presented outreach programs about Houston’s History to 310 adults in the community. The presentations took place at Holly Hall Retirement Community, Potpourri Club, International Friends, Texas German Society/Harris County Chapter, New Kentucky Chapter of Daughters of the Republic of Texas, Belmont Village at West University, and Briargrove Park Women’s Club.





## LECTURES

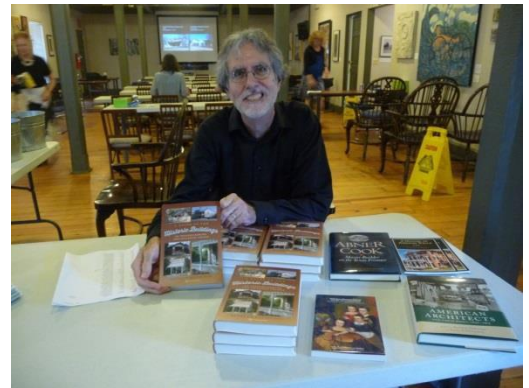


**Finger Noontime Lecture:** *Discover the River That Built Texas: A History of the Lower Brazos River*  
by Lora-Marie Bernard  
(June 18, 2015)

Lorie Marie Bernard recounted how Stephen F. Austin chose the Brazos River as the site for the first Texas colony in the early 1800s because of its vast water and fertile soil. Further development was then spurred by the growth of Imperial Sugar Company and later the development of the Cane and Rice Belt Irrigation System in the early twentieth century. Subsequently the Brazos River and its waterways would also supply the Texas Gulf Coast petrochemical

**Finger Noontime Lecture:** *Tracking Architectural and Cultural Change Through the Generations in Fredericksburg*  
by Dr. Kenneth Hafertepe  
(July 16, 2015)

Dr. Hafertepe reviewed many of the historic buildings of Fredericksburg and described how they gradually transitioned from classic German construction and technique to American styles with more of a regional flavor.



**Finger Noontime Lecture:** *My Ancestors Founded Houston and All I Got Was This Lousy T-Shirt*  
by Paul Mabry  
(August 20, 2015)

In honor of Houston's August birthday anniversary, Paul Mabry, a sixth-generation Houstonian and a descendant of a non-founder Allen brother, provided a non-academic look at the entire Allen family's role in early Houston. In addition to the founding Allen brothers, John Kirby and Augustus, other members of the family came to Houston and established lives and careers in the dynamic Houston community.



**Finger Noontime Lecture:** *John P. McGovern, M.D., A Biographer's Perspective* by Dr. Bryant Boutwell  
(September 17, 2015)

Dr. Boutwell discussed his new book which chronicles the influential life of his long-time friend and colleague, Dr. John P. McGovern. Dr. McGovern's holistic approach to medicine and team approach to healthcare transcended the traditional boundaries of institutional identities and medical specialties. Dr. McGovern also displayed a fervent passion for philanthropy in the Houston community, especially those causes related to children and children's education.

***Finger Noontime Lecture: From Rice Farmers to CEO's:  
The "Quiet" Minority of Houston***  
by Dr. Abbie Grubb  
(October 15, 2015)

Dr. Grubb discussed how the first Japanese-American immigrants came to the Houston region in the early twentieth century to grow rice which became an important commodity for the region and the state. Although comprising a minority of the local population, the contributions of this community to the economy, culture and society of Houston is significant.



***Finger Noontime Lecture: Korean American in Houston: Building Bridges Across Cultures and Generations***  
by Dr. Haejin E. Koh  
(November 19, 2015)

Dr. Kohn serves as the Associate Director of the Chau Center for Asian Studies at Rice University. Dr. Koh described the make-up of this small but culturally rich segment of the population that began coming to Houston in the mid-twentieth century.

***Finger Noontime Lecture: Famous Trees of Texas***  
by Gretchen Riley  
(January 21, 2016)

Gretchen Riley, Staff Forester and Partnership Coordinator for Texas A&M Forest Service, took the audience on a photographic journey to relive the stories of some of the famous Texas trees that have witnessed exciting events and eras in our state's history.



***Finger Noontime Lecture: From the Vaquero to the Western Cowboy***  
by Betty Colley and Jane Monday  
(February 18, 2016)

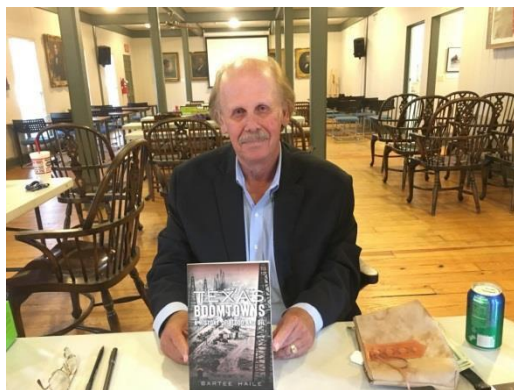


Authors Betty Colley and Jane Monday gave a brief history of the area between the Rio Grande to the south and the Nueces River to the north, home of the famous south Texas King and Kenedy ranches. They described how the ranching culture of Texas and the American West owes its origins to the legacy of the Mexican vaqueros who perfected the skills of working cattle from horseback, rounding up cattle, tending the herd at night, roping and branding.



**Finger Noontime Lecture:** *Ghosts on the Mudflats: Artifacts Recovered from the Lost Townsite of San Jacinto*  
by Larry Golden and Linda Gorski  
(March 17, 2016)

Mr. Golden and Ms. Gorski displayed and described the artifacts recovered from the mudflats of Buffalo Bayou near the long forgotten 1820s – 1900 townsite of San Jacinto by the Golden family in the 1960's. The townsite adjoined the San Jacinto Battlefield and many of the artifacts date to the 1836 period of the Battle. The townsite was also a gathering place for Texians fleeing during the Runaway Scrape in 1836 as well as the site of an important Civil War armory in the 1860s.



**Finger Noontime Lecture:** *Texas Oil Boom Towns of the Early 1900s: A History of Blood and Oil*  
by Bartee Haile  
(April 21, 2016)

Author Bartee Haile described how Texas transitioned from a sleepy Southern state with an economy based on cotton and cattle to economic giant based on oil. He detailed the series of oil discoveries that started with Spindletop in 1901 and ended with East Texas in the 1930's and how they impacted small towns like Beaumont, Ranger, Desdemona, Mexia and Borger.

**Finger Noontime Lecture:** *The History of the Westmoreland Addition*  
by Jim Parsons  
(May 19, 2016)

Jim Parsons of Preservation Houston presented a talk about Westmoreland Addition, the original site of the Staiti House. The neighborhood represented an innovative approach to community planning modeled after popular communities in St. Louis and is significant for its place in the development of Houston between 1902 and 1943. The neighborhood was home to important Houston residents such as Walter Fondren, Harris Masterson, Florence Sterling, Oveta Culp Hobby and Lyndon Johnson to name a few.



**Building Arts Lecture:** *Preserving a Landmark: Archeology at the Kellum-Noble House*  
by Linda Gorski  
(August 26, 2015)

During foundation work at the 1847 Kellum-Noble House, preliminary excavation inside the building uncovered broken pieces of plates and other household items. At the request of the Texas



Historical Commission, the Houston Archeological Society (HAS) mobilized and set up a project to recover artifacts from much of the soil removed from below the house. Under the direction of HAS president Linda Gorski and vice-president Louis Aulbach, HAS recovered more than 10,200 individual pieces, from fragments of glass and ceramics including Texian Campaign Ware, to rare German marbles and coins dating from 1845. Also recovered were many beautiful buttons made of shell, ceramic, wood, and bone and an intact slate pencil and ink bottle. With guidance from HAS member and Texas Archeological Steward Beth Aucoin, HAS members are preparing these items to be archived under the State of Texas. Linda Gorski discussed the salvage archeology project and showed photographs highlighting the recovered items that have enhanced our understanding of the historic Kellum-Noble House.

***Building Arts Lecture: Bringing Back the Bendit House: an Early Midcentury Modern Restoration/Renovation Project*** by Steve Curry  
(February 24, 2016)



Lars Bang, one of the first graduates of the University of Houston's College of Architecture, designed the Bendit House, constructed in 1953 in the then-new Ayrshire subdivision in suburban Houston. Heralded by both local and national media at the time, it was later forgotten as the neighborhood around it evolved and later modifications obscured much of its conceptual clarity. Architect Steve Curry purchased the home and embarked on a long-term effort to both carefully restore its character-defining features and make sensitive modifications. He spoke about the challenges and rewards of this project as both architect and homeowner.

***Building Arts Lecture: Saving Galveston's Treasured Architectural Heritage: Iron of the 1800s***  
by Doug McLean  
(May 25, 2016)

Sculptor Doug McLean has decades of experience producing and preserving metal elements for historic structures, including the tall ship Elissa, Moody Mansion, and several other historic buildings in Galveston. Formerly a sculpture instructor at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston's Glassell School of Art, Mr. McLean has previously lectured at Columbia University and authored articles for the Association of Preservation Technology, and Traditional Building Magazine, on preservation techniques for cast and wrought iron. Mr. McLean spoke about his work, techniques, and challenges presented with the conservation of historic metals.



## CANDLELIGHT TOUR



The Heritage Society's 53<sup>rd</sup> **Candlelight Tour**, chaired by Kathy and Ted Zwieg, was held on December 12 and 13, 2015. Nearly 2,500 people attended the annual event, and were treated to holiday music, decorations, arts and crafts activities, and treats. For the first time, Calpine Corporation's *Elves on the Run* family fun run became a part of the festivities and for the second year, unique arts and crafts created by talented local and regional were available for sale at the Candlelight Tour Holiday Art Market.



Roaming the park were historic characters from the pages of Houston's history such as Oveta Culp Hobby and Nathaniel and Elmyra Kellum. Also roaming the park were Pecos Bill, the Yellow Rose of Texas, Poncho Villa and others from Houston Livestock Show and



Rodeo's History Live troupe. Musicians and singers such as the Houston Boychoir, Shimmer Flute Choir, Balalaika Orchestra and The Mission Bells filled the park with the joyous sounds of the holiday season.



The Heritage Society gratefully acknowledges the following **Candlelight Tour 2015** sponsors: FROWbiz, Calpine, Cameron Management, Brookfield, Evelyn & John Boatwright, Jo & Jim Furr/Gensler, The Robert & Janice McNair Foundation, Houston Parks & Recreation Department, Mayor's Office of Special Events, The City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance, Kathy & Ted Zwieg, Isla & Tommy Reckling, Joanne E. Zumbrun, AlliedBarton Security Services, and Fiesta. Preceding **Candlelight Tour** on



Sunday, November 15, was the annual *Holiday Tea* where guests learned about the art of the Japanese Tea Ceremony from members of the Houston Urasenke Tankokai Association.

## WINE WEDNESDAYS

The Duncan Store inside the Museum Gallery served as the gathering place for wine, beer and socializing on Wednesday evenings in October and November, 2015. The Heritage Society offered extended hours with the *Wine Wednesdays* program and offered new "mini" tours of three of the historic buildings. Who killed William Marsh Rice was the topic of discussion at the 1850 Nichols-Rice-Cherry House. just one of the topics covered during house tours, including the, 1823 Old Place and 1868 San Felipe Cottage.

## FOOD TRUCK TUESDAYS

What better way to reach out to our downtown neighbors than through food? Starting in October, 2015 and continuing through February, 2016, The Heritage Society hosted a different food truck every Tuesday. A pilot program to promote tours and the Museum Gallery to downtown workers, tables and chairs in Connally Plaza provided seating to those purchasing their lunch and discounted tours were offered for a return visit. THS and the various food truck vendors promoted the event through social media: Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and helped to increase the number of followers of THS.



## SEE IRREPLACEABLE PLACES



The Heritage Society continued the *See Irreplaceable Places* (SIP) series on August 27, 2015 with a tour of the Tanglewood home of Marc Melcher. Built in 1954 by August Bering, the Tudor ranch-style home provided a wonderful setting for hearing from Norman Bering and his sister Gaile Withers, about growing up in the house and Tanglewood area.

On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, guests were invited to explore Bill Baldwin's beautiful 1910 Prairie Style home in the historic Woodland Heights neighborhood. The home, used for more than 30 years as a nursing home and assisted living center, was painstakingly renovated by Mr. Baldwin over a period of several years.



On October 28, the first floor of a 1904 Colonial Revival in the Westmoreland addition was filled to capacity with people excitedly touring the home of Mayor Annise Parker and wife Kathy Hubbard. Known as the Crawford home, Mayor Parker talked of her love of the home, jokingly referring to it as her "money-pit."



**SIP** resumed in the spring, with the first reception on March 22, 2016 at the home of Laura and Roy Nichol. The 1939 John Staub designed home in River Oaks was modeled after The Heritage Society's own Kellum-Noble House, and has special meaning to owner Laura Nichol – her mother Evelyn Boatwright has been a THS volunteer and board member for more than 30 years. Many guests were amazed at the similarities to the Kellum-Noble House, and praised the home owners for their care in refurbishing home while also maintaining its architectural character.



Anne Whitlock and Michael Skelly opened their home for The Heritage Society on April 21<sup>st</sup>. They not only renovated the 1910 Engine House No. 2, a City of Houston Historic Landmark, but also relocated six 1890s Victorian houses to their property in the East End to save them from being demolished. Guests were treated to two tours – the former engine house that Whitlock and Skelly now call home, and one of the restored Victorians, now owned by Drew Bacon.



The 2015/2016 *See Irreplaceable Places* series ended with a tour of Houston Parks and Recreation Department's (HPARD) 1956 Gragg Building. The Gragg Building was designed by noted Houston architecture firm MacKie & Kamrath, and exhibits the influence of notable American architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Built by the Farnsworth and Chambers Construction Company as their suburban corporate office building, Gragg then served as a temporary headquarters for NASA in the early 1960s. Guests were led on personal tours by knowledgeable staff, and enjoyed comments from HPARD director, Joe Turner.



## VOLUNTEERS

During the 2015/2016 program year, 698 volunteers contributed approximately 4,960 volunteer hours, valued by Independent Sector at \$116,858 to The Heritage Society. Volunteers served as museum guides, tour guides, guest speakers and curators, actors, entertainers, ticket sellers and takers, and helped with children's events and programs. Volunteers also helped survey, photograph, and catalog collections and library items, and served as board and advisory council members.



*Candlelight Tour*, THS's largest tour program, would not have been possible without the volunteers who gave their time and talents for two evenings in December, 2015. FROWbiz Entertainment scripted scenarios, recruited, trained and costumed the actors who performed in path shows throughout the park; Volunteers from History Live! strolled the park portraying characters from the region's past, engaging guests with their stories; and the Gamma Sigma Sigma and Hannah No. 9 sororities served on the front lines at the event box office. In addition to these groups, many talented musicians and singers brought the park to life with their



beautiful holiday sounds.

Performing this year at



*Candlelight Tour* were Shimmer Flute Choir, Cy-Fair High School, Atascocita High School, Balalaika Orchestra, Christ the Redeemer Ringers, Houston Boychoir, Aldine Carver Magnet High School Choir, St. Vincent DePaul Choir, Houston Liederkrantz, Houston Saengerbund, The Mission Bells, Holy Ghost Church Affinity Choir, Reading Jr. High Choir, Travis Elementary Choir, Memorial High School Choir,

Houston Bronze Ensemble, and Houston Storytellers.



items from Wabash Feed Store, Raising Cane's, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, House of Coffee, and The Heritage Society. Refreshments were compliments of Phoenicia Specialty Foods and Raising Cane's.

Coinciding with National Volunteer Week, THS recognized its many volunteers at a reception in the Museum Gallery on April 17, 2016. Volunteer Museum and Tour Guides David Marsh, Debra Bryant, Dee Reiher, Becky Marsh, Elise Daulley and Ann Michelle Thomas were acknowledged for their 20+ years of service; Pam Young and Claudette Rogers were recognized for ten years of service; Margaret Burgess, Connie Byers, Jerrie Stobb, Al Fritsche, Cheryl Fritsche and Diana Bertrand were acknowledged for their five years of service. Tour guide Julio Ascencio was awarded a lifetime membership in memory of longtime docent Pat Fortney. Attendees' names were drawn for door prizes, with donated



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## **LOOKING TO THE FUTURE**

Throughout 2015/2016, The Heritage Society (THS) board of directors and staff worked to meet the goals and objectives outlined in the organization's 2015-2020 strategic plan. The Heritage Society expanded the interpretive periods of the historic buildings, organized and mounted temporary exhibits about lesser known aspects of Houston's history, opened historic buildings for private special events, and reorganized the museum gallery to create a permanent Houston History exhibit space and accommodate a larger gift shop inventory. Additionally, new strategic partnerships for expanding program content, developing new programs, increasing earned income, and attracting public and private funding were developed. One such alliance, the merging of Houston Arts and Media into The Heritage Society, will be accomplished by October 1, 2016. This exciting combination will enhance the work that both organizations have been doing for so long to preserve and celebrate the stories, places, and things that make up our local and regional identity.

The Heritage Society will continue to address the goals of our strategic plan by developing new and exciting ways for visitors to learn about the history of Houston, Harris County, and Texas. Watch for an expanded THS web presence in 2017, and for a redesigned Houston History exhibit in the museum gallery where visitors will be introduced to the fascinating history of our community.

