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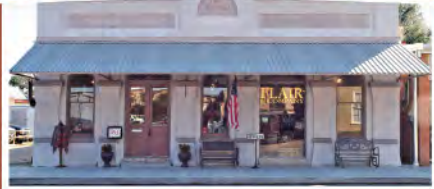


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History, Heritage, Fun



JW'S RESTAURANT

A Family & Staff Collaboration



ON THE PORCH

Anita Joyce Advises



MUSEUM ROUNDUP

40-plus Museums to Visit

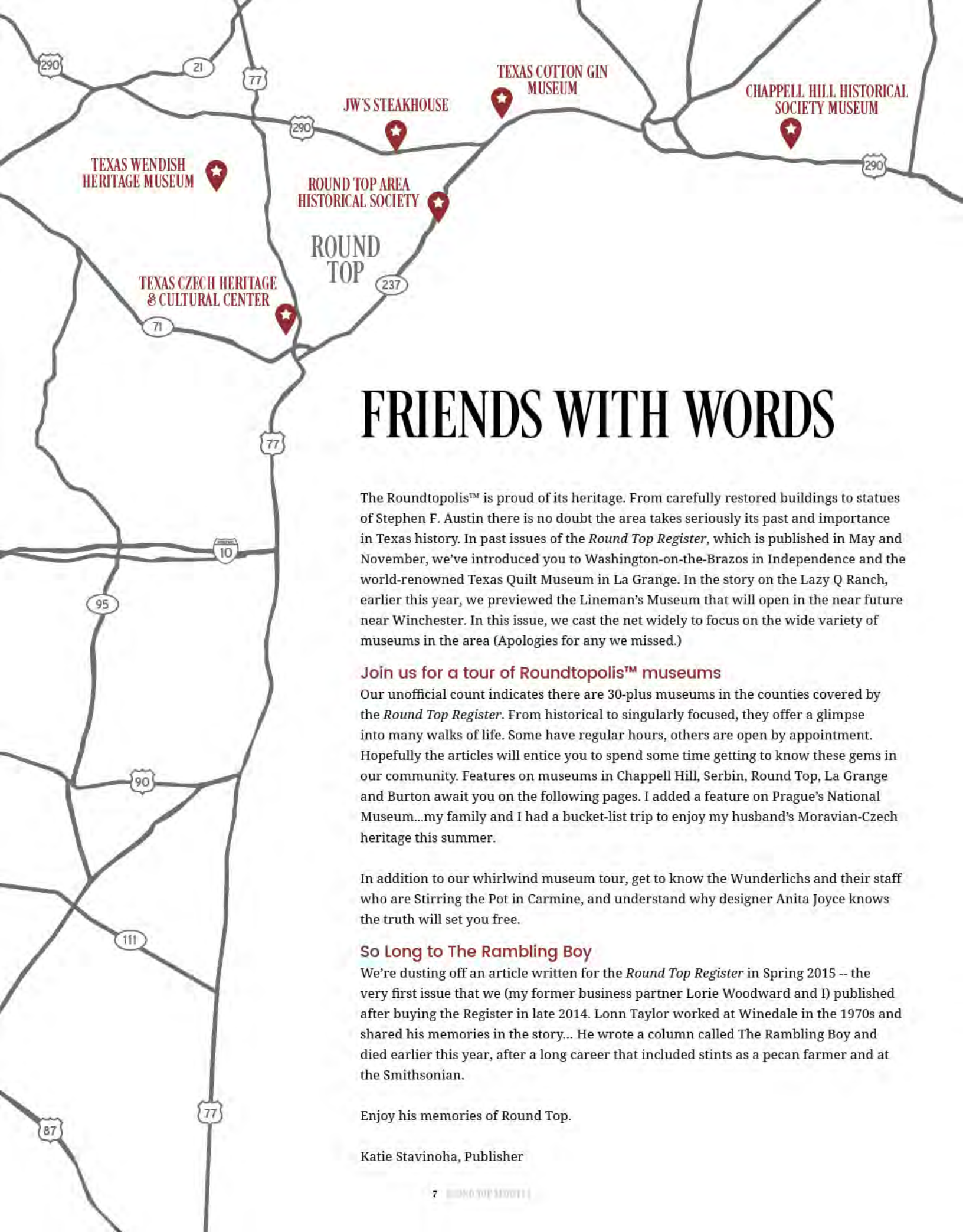
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FRIENDS WITH WORDS

The Roundtopolis™ is proud of its heritage. From carefully restored buildings to statues of Stephen F. Austin there is no doubt the area takes seriously its past and importance in Texas history. In past issues of the *Round Top Register*, which is published in May and November, we've introduced you to Washington-on-the-Brazos in Independence and the world-renowned Texas Quilt Museum in La Grange. In the story on the Lazy Q Ranch, earlier this year, we previewed the Lineman's Museum that will open in the near future near Winchester. In this issue, we cast the net widely to focus on the wide variety of museums in the area (Apologies for any we missed.)

Join us for a tour of Roundtopolis™ museums

Our unofficial count indicates there are 30-plus museums in the counties covered by the *Round Top Register*. From historical to singularly focused, they offer a glimpse into many walks of life. Some have regular hours, others are open by appointment. Hopefully the articles will entice you to spend some time getting to know these gems in our community. Features on museums in Chappell Hill, Serbin, Round Top, La Grange and Burton await you on the following pages. I added a feature on Prague's National Museum...my family and I had a bucket-list trip to enjoy my husband's Moravian-Czech heritage this summer.

In addition to our whirlwind museum tour, get to know the Wunderlichs and their staff who are Stirring the Pot in Carmine, and understand why designer Anita Joyce knows the truth will set you free.

So Long to The Rambling Boy

We're dusting off an article written for the *Round Top Register* in Spring 2015 -- the very first issue that we (my former business partner Lorie Woodward and I) published after buying the Register in late 2014. Lonn Taylor worked at Winedale in the 1970s and shared his memories in the story... He wrote a column called The Rambling Boy and died earlier this year, after a long career that included stints as a pecan farmer and at the Smithsonian.

Enjoy his memories of Round Top.

Katie Stavinoha, Publisher

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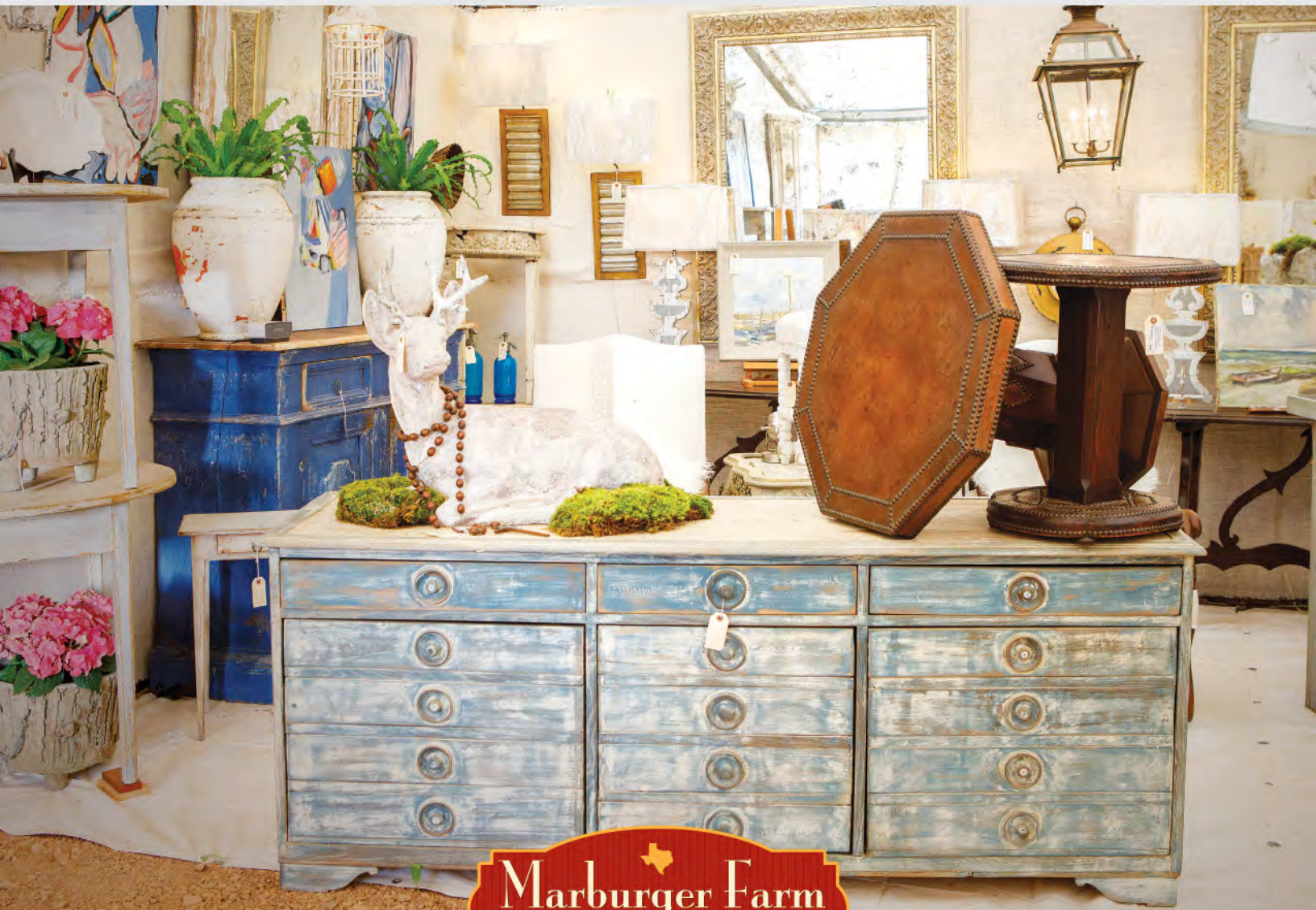
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TEXAS CZECH HERITAGE



PHOTO BY LORE A. WOODWARD

Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center: Preserving the Past for the Future

Article by LORIE A. WOODWARD | Photos courtesy of TEXAS CZECH HERITAGE AND CULTURAL CENTER

The idea for the Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center, established in 1997 in La Grange, began at the 1936 Texas Centennial Celebration held at the State Fair of Texas.

"There was a huge mural and exhibit depicting Czech culture in Texas that planted the seed about the need to celebrate our history, language and culture," said Mark Hermes, manager of TCHCC.

Decade after decade the idea would surface and then disappear. Then, in 1996, at the annual meeting of the Texans of Czech Ancestry, an umbrella organization that connects all of the Czech-founded groups ranging from the SPJST and KJT to the Czech Educational Foundation of Texas and the Czech Heritage Society of Texas and several others, it surfaced again – with urgency.

"By the late '90s, Texas was changing quickly," Hermes said. "Representatives from the Czech Heritage Society, who presented the idea to the larger group, said, 'We need to have a central place before we lose our heritage, language and all of the artifacts and history we've collected.' People in the room agreed."

THE PAST

While their names may have been different, the attendees at that meeting shared similar ancestral stories. In the 1850s, a confluence of factors, including military conscription, crop failures, and ethnic persecution prompted the Czechs to leave their homeland. Rev. Josef Arnošt Bergmann, who settled in Cat Spring in Austin County, brought Texas to the

attention of his fellow Europeans by writing letters extolling the opportunities that awaited future immigrants including the ready availability of fertile land.

"Land was important to the Czechs, but the opportunity to own it in the Czech lands was limited," Hermes said. "The firstborn inherited everything – and everyone else had to look elsewhere."

In 1853, Josef L. Lešikar inspired by Bergmann's letters, led the first group of Czechs to Texas. During the 17-week Trans-Atlantic voyage, they lost half their number en route to the Port of Galveston, which became the preferred port of entry for later immigrants.



The first group came to Cat Spring but then found better land and moved into Fayette County. Fayetteville became the dispersal point for the immigrants with Austin, Fayette, Lavaca and Washington counties being the site of early settlements. Dubina, in southeastern

Fayette County, became the first Czech settlement.

"Eventually, the Czechs founded some 250 different communities across the state," said Hermes, noting that the majority of the immigrants came from the Moravian region and felt at home in the similar landscape they found in Central Texas.

Drawing on their shared commitment to conserving their collective past, Texans of Czech Ancestry spearheaded the effort, creating a committee that became the interim board of directors for the fledgling TCHCC. When it came time to choose a location for the new center, the board called for proposals from Czech communities across the state. La Grange was selected from a field of four.

"Right before World War I, which is considered the end of the main Czech immigration period, Fayette and Lavaca counties had more people of Czech heritage than any other counties in Texas—and Texas had more Czech immigrants than any other state in the nation," Hermes said, "Fayette County's population at one time was about 80 percent Czech, earning it the nickname 'Cradle of Czech Immigration.'"

In March 1997, the TCHCC was officially incorporated and later that year recognized by then-Gov. George W. Bush through a concurrent House Resolution, which also honored the contributions of Texas Czechs to the state's history. The TCHCC signed a 100-year lease with the city of La Grange for a 26-acre site adjacent to the Fayette County Fairgrounds. ★



"Although we have Texas in our name, we are not state supported," said Hermes, the center's only full-time employee. "We are volunteer-based and rely on donations, grants and fundraisers to operate."

By 2000, the TCHCC had opened its doors to the public, using the restored Kalich House, a circa 1890s farmhouse originally located in the Schulenburg area, as its visitor's center.

"More than 80 volunteers from all over the state, put more than 3,000 hours into restoring the Kalich House," said Hermes. "Their efforts not only literally put the center on the map, but symbolized the level of commitment and passion that people have for this place."

THE PRESENT

Today, the Kalich House, which now serves as the Czech Music Museum of Texas featuring folk, classical, liturgical and polka music genres, is part of a multi-structure complex. TCHCC Main Center Building as well as the Czech Village, which includes 10 main structures, and the 5,500-square-foot Sanford Schmid Amphitheater, home to Muziky, Muziky, an annual performance of Czech music held in conjunction with Heritage Fest in October.

"At the center, we tell the whole story of the Texas Czechs from the old country to the new, but we really focus on the Texas experience to keep our unique heritage, culture and language alive," Hermes said.

Visitors start in the 10,000-square-foot main center that houses the "Our New Home" Museum and the Bill and Betty Melnar Library as well as a dining and meeting room and a gift shop. Completed in 2009, the building features a contemporary glass entrance that represents the "beacon of light that attracted settlers to Texas."

The museum houses a mix of permanent exhibits dedicated to Texas-Czechs. The permanent exhibits are arranged along the outer wall, while the center is reserved for exhibits that change annually.

"Currently, our central exhibit is 'Made in Czechoslovakia' and features handcrafted items, kroje, and other patron donated artifacts that were made in the early Czechoslovakia, which will be changed to 'Made in Czechoslovakia, Christmas Special' during the holidays," Hermes said.

For the record, the museum also features a print of the 1936 mural that started it all.

"We tried to get the original here, but it is too fragile to move," Hermes said. "It will stay at the SPJST Lodge #88 in Houston."

The library is full of resources, ranging from port of entry records, census records, baptismal records from Texas-Czech parishes (as many as 90 percent of the immigrants were Catholic), reference books, Czech novels to microfilm of Czech language newspapers. All can be used on site.

"Ours is the largest Czech genealogical library in the country," Hermes said. "I often say, 'If you're not kin to somebody when you get here, you will be by the time you leave.' Time after time, visitors will strike up conversations with other visitors from a different part of the state only to discover they have relatives in common."

The staff also maintains a relationship with the Texas Immigration Museum in the Czech Republic that chronicles the life of the immigrants from the perspective of their homeland. It is estimated that about half of the Czech lands' population left during the immigration period.

"Using records from the Texas Immigration museum, people have found the house number where their ancestors lived previously and then used Google Earth to see it without ever leaving Texas," Hermes said.

The Czech Village, comprised of renovated period structures and replicas built in historic style, spreads out behind the Main Center. Armed with detailed information, visitors can take a self-guided tour of the past showcasing different aspects of Texas-Czech family, farm and community life.

"In the village, time stops at about 1940 just prior to World War II," Hermes said. "After the war, big changes such as electricity and mechanization where tractors replaced draft animals, came to rural Texas."

The most recent addition to the village is the SPJST Hall #19 from Velehrad in north Lavaca County. Opened in May, the hall contains the original furniture and the new paint duplicates the original color scheme.

"Life revolved around land, family, friends, faith and civic involvement," Hermes said. "Organizations such as the SPJST were central to life in the Czech communities—and this lets people experience what it would be like to attend a meeting in 1897."

The Hospoda (tavern) and General Store pays tribute to the country stores that dotted the landscape.

"At the country stores, people got their mail, drank a beer with friends while playing Tarocky or dominoes and bought the staples that they couldn't make or grow themselves," Hermes said.

The Czech Newspaper Museum contains the printing press and type used to print the first Czech newspaper in the United States as well as the motor that once ran the press for the La Grange Journal newspaper. Texas-Czechs were politically minded and committed to preserving their language, so Czech-language newspapers served two purposes.

"The Svoboda, Fayette County's Czech newspaper was founded in 1885,"

**IF YOU'RE NOT
KIN TO SOMEBODY
WHEN YOU GET
HERE, YOU WILL
BE BY THE TIME
YOU LEAVE.**

Hermes said. "The Našinec, published in Granger, was the last operational Czech newspaper in Texas and it closed in 2018."

The village includes three houses: the Hoelscher Haus built in 1880, operated by the Polka Lovers Club and open by appointment only, the Hulchanek-Salaš House, a white frame farmhouse built in 1890 in the Holman area of Fayette County that represents middle-class rural life, and the Migl House, a rustic farmhouse built in 1890 by František and Johana Migl, showcasing authentic period furniture and family memorabilia. In 2005, it was estimated that the Migls had more than 5,000 descendants.

"All of the houses began with two rooms, and families would add on as they became more prosperous," Hermes said. "At one time, the Salaš house, which is about 1,500 square feet after all of the additions, housed 13 people."

Outbuildings such as a log corn crib, the Janak Barn site of the Texas Czech Agriculture Museum, and the Sladek

Smoke and Wash House as well as the Zapalač Sawmill round out the village.

"The outbuildings tell even more about daily life and daily living than the homes and businesses," Hermes said. "Here is where they did the work that allowed them first to survive and then to thrive."

For instance, a dog trot log corn crib may have been one of the first things a family built on their land after, or before, a rudimentary dwelling. Some crude houses were transformed into a barn as time went on.

"Depending on what the family needed, the dog-trot cribs could store corn, protect equipment from the elements or hold livestock until they could build a barn," Hermes said. "A true barn, such as the Janak Barn, signaled a move toward prosperity. They may have even lived in the structure as they built their house. If you look at it, it was better than a tent."

While the center is open year-round, the village vividly comes to life during the annual Heritage Fest held the third weekend of October.

"We start the printing press, fire up the saw mill, smoke sausage in the smoke house, put chickens in the brooder, fill the barn with hands-on activities and offer a host of other things to bring the early 20th century back to life," said Hermes, noting the event also includes historic demonstrations as well as vendors, food, music and the annual Muziky, Muziky. "Experiencing history is important because if you don't know where you came from you march blindly into the future." ★

Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center

250 W. Fair Grounds Rd.
La Grange, TX 78945
www.czechtexas.org
888-785-4500 / 979-968-9399
info@czechtexas.org

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Round Top Area Historical Society:

Preserving Round Top's Rich History

Article by LORIE A. WOODWARD | Photos courtesy of ROUND TOP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The all-volunteer Round Top Area Historical Society preserves Round Top's rich history at its two-acre campus and on its website.

"We showcase artifacts, donated by local families, that demonstrate life in early Round Top," said Randy Melton, who is one of the society's volunteer historians. "We compile and preserve local history – everything we can find and confirm – on our website, so people see it and read it wherever they are.

"Our role is saving all of the history of Round Top because a lot of it gets lost or misconstrued."

Stephen Townsend was the first known Anglo settler in the Round Top area in 1826. Townsend began his settlement near Richter Cemetery on present-day Farm-to-Market Road 1457. This settlement, sited on a hilltop for safety purposes, was located about two miles northeast of present day Round Top.

"Round Top's historical roots stretch back before Texas was a Republic," said Melton, noting that Stephen Townsend's family had more men serving at the Battle of San Jacinto than any other family in Texas.

American-English immigrants were the first to settle the Round Top area in the 1820s and 1830s then the German immigrants began settling in the area during the 1840s through the 1860s becoming the dominant cultural force, especially after the Civil War.

"The people who settled here survived with very little and yet enjoyed a rich lifestyle of family and community," Melton said. "Round Top exists because of

their industriousness."

The museum complex, located beside Henkel Square Market and behind the Round Top Post Office, includes four historic buildings: the Noak Farmhouse, built in the early 1900s, which serves as the welcome center as well as a museum; the Kraus House, a rustic wooden house circa 1890s that includes primitive furnishings; a log cabin built in the 1880s; and the African-American Connersville Primitive Baptist Church built in 1873, which celebrates the area's African-American settlers and their history. The Jaehne Educational and Cultural Pavilion and the Volunteer Fire Department Building, which houses a 1905 (updated 1930s) horse-drawn, hand-pump fire wagon, round out the site.

"Our exhibits are permanent, but we add to them because people are constantly gifting us with artifacts they find as they go through their families' collections," Melton said. "The wonderful thing about artifacts is that people experience history in a tangible way. It's fun to touch, see and feel."

For instance, the Round Top Historical Society has the foot-powered wood turn-lathe that Johann Wandke used in 1866 to build the cedar pipe organ for Round Top's Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

Another highlight of the society's holdings is a collection of glass negative photos taken by Friederika Recknagel, wife of a local merchant, capturing life in Round Top from the 1880s – 1910.

"During that period of time, photography was just emerging," Melton said. "The fact that we have an archive of

images of the town is astounding."

The website is updated regularly as new information comes to light.

"When people come to us, they expect us to find out the who, what, when, where and why behind the event," Melton said.

Preserving Round Top's history is important for the families who have called the town home for generations and for those who are new to the area.

"To really know where you're going, you have to know where you've been," Melton said. "Our little town is caught up in the growth that's occurring between Austin and Houston, so as people come here today, it's important that we understand the people who came here five generations ago to build it and what they sacrificed to stay." ★

Round Top Area Historical Society Museum

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Texas Wendish Heritage Museum: Staking a Claim on History

Article by LORIE A. WOODWARD | Photos courtesy of TEXAS WENDISH HERITAGE SOCIETY

In 1854, a group of 600 Wends left their home in southeastern Germany and staked a claim on a new life on 4,000 acres in a community they named Serbin, near present-day Giddings.

"It's hard to imagine what would prompt people to leave everything they knew for an unknown life in an unknown place," said Marian Wiederhold, Texas Wendish Heritage Museum director, whose great-great grandfather George Kasper was one of the original settlers. "Our museum exists to preserve the unique story of the Texas-Wends."

The Wends, who lived near the Czech and Polish borders, were an ethnic minority denied economic opportunity and religious freedom. At the time, the German government wanted all Protestant religions to be grouped into a single tradition.

"The Wends were Lutheran and wanted to practice their faith according to their own understandings and precepts," Wiederhold said. "Their religion was austere and conservative. In fact, until the early 1900s, Wendish brides wore black when they married to signify 'the hardships of this life.'"

Upon arrival, the Wends set aside 95 acres in the center of their land holding as a site for St. Paul Lutheran Church and a parochial school. The museum is located on the same grounds.

"The immigrants adorned the inside of their church – the only Lutheran church among the area's painted churches – with beautiful, simple decorations in blue, white and gold," said Wiederhold, who was baptized, confirmed and married at

St. Paul and plans to be buried there as well. "Unlike the Catholic parishes that had support from the dioceses as they constructed their home churches, St. Paul congregation bore the full responsibility for the church."

St. Paul Lutheran School traces its origins to the decks of the Ben Nevis, the ship that transported the original immigrants to Texas.

"They started holding classes on the ship – and the school has been in continuous operation ever since," Wiederhold said. The school educates students from kindergarten through eighth grade with the local congregation paying a portion of each student's tuition.

In addition to education, the Wends valued their culture, particularly their language.

"Our forefathers also valued their language and came to preserve it as part of their culture," said Wiederhold, noting the Volksblatt, the German newspaper based in Giddings during early settlement included articles in Wendish. "Ironically, the assimilation with German neighbors caused them to lose it more rapidly."

Today, in the area around Bautzen, Germany, home to many of the original Wendish immigrants, the street signs are in German and Wendish.

The Texas Wendish Heritage Society maintains a relationship with The Domovina, a museum in Bautzen that celebrates the history of the Texas-Wend immigrants. The Domovina provides additional genealogical resources to supplement church records, immigration records, the online Wendish Research

Exchange and other resources available at the Texas Wendish Heritage Museum.

Visitors to the Texas Wendish Heritage Museum, whether they're looking for family information or simply interested in the culture, can explore the exhibits in the St. Peter Building, which includes the library, the gift shop as well as permanent exhibits, and the St. Paul Building that began life as a two-room school house for the parochial school.

"Our exhibits include artifacts donated from many families in the area," Wiederhold said. "Some highlights include a traditional black wedding dress, a dudelsack, which is a Wendish instrument similar to a bagpipe, Easter Eggs decorated using all four of the traditional methods as well as a school room complete from the turn of the 20th Century – and a whole lot more."

A log cabin featuring furniture and utensils representative of life in the early settlement and a second cabin filled with early tools and farm equipment round out the museum complex.

As land around Serbin became scarce, the Wends established other Texas communities including Warda, Fedor, Manheim, Loebau, Lincoln, Winchester, La Grange, Thorndale, Walburg, Copperas Cove, The Grove, Vernon, Swiss Alp, Noack, and Aleman. ★





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CHAPPELL HILL

2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY 14-15	Chappell Hill Sweetheart Stroll
APRIL 18 & 19	Chappell Hill Historical Society "Bluebonnet Festival"
MAY 23	Downtown Artwalk
JUNE 19	Juneteenth Program – Chappell Hill Historical Society Museum
JULY 4	"Biggest Small Town July 4th Parade" 10 a.m. – Rain or Shine! Downtown Chappell Hill
AUGUST 8	"Chappell Hill Lavender Festival"
SEPTEMBER 6	St. Stanislaus Catholic Church Annual Bazaar
SEPTEMBER 19	Airing of the Quilts
OCTOBER 10 & 11	Chappell Hill Historical Society Scarecrow Festival
DECEMBER 12	Chappell Hill Garden Club Annual Christmas Home Tour
DECEMBER 12	Chappell Hill Teddy Bear Parade Downtown Chappell Hill



FOR MORE DETAILS SEE
www.chappellhilltx.com
www.chappellhillgardenclub.com
www.chappellhilllavender.com
www.chappellhillhistoricalsociety.com



Chappell Hill Historical Society Museum

9220 Poplar St., Chappell Hill, TX 77426

979-836-6033

web: chappellhillhistoricalsociety.com

email: chappellhillmuseum@gmail.com

Hours: Wednesday – Saturday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Sunday 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Admission: Free. (Donations accepted.)

Tours: Guided by docent or self-guided.

Group Tours (*including the Museum and up to four other historic sites*): By appointment with advance notice for groups of 10 more. Fee, depending on group size, applies.

Don't Miss! Annual Events:

Bluebonnet Festival - *Second weekend of April, depending on Easter holiday*

Scarecrow Festival - *Second weekend of October*

Fourth of July Parade (*followed by family fun on the museum grounds*)

Chappell Hill Historical Society Museum:

Built on Education

Article by LORIE A. WOODWARD | Photos courtesy of CHAPPELL HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Chappell Hill Historical Society Museum provides an in-depth look at the foundation of Chappell Hill in Washington County.

"The museum focuses on the events and people who made our community what it is today," Museum Director Stephanie Ddughdhnemimier said.

The substantial red brick building that houses the museum was built in 1926 as the Chappell Hill Public School on the site previously occupied by the Chappell Hill Female College, Texas' first female college chartered in 1852. Its brother school, the Chappell Hill Male College sat on the other side of the Chappell Hill Methodist Church, which is adjacent to the museum. The current church, built in 1901 in the Carpenter Gothic style, was founded in 1849 and still holds services.

"Education has always been important in Chappell Hill, so it's a privilege to carry on that tradition by sharing the community's history through education," Ddughdhnemimier said.

The museum features six rooms with permanent exhibits dedicated to: public education, including a complete circa 1940s classroom; higher education; the plantation economy and cotton industry; community organizations; Polish culture and its impact (Chappell Hill has a large contingent of residents whose ancestors emigrated from Poland); and war-time service of local community members. In addition, the auditorium features changing exhibits based on wide-ranging topics such as Polish Heritage Month, quilting and Christmas traditions.

Visitors can also experience the art of Rev. Johnny Swearingen, a local folk artist who rose to national prominence in the 20th century. The museum has become a focal point for visitors to Washington County. It hosts numerous theatrical performances and musical events.

"We have the largest collection of Johnny Swearingen's art in the nation," Ddughdhnemimier said. "His work is permanently displayed, bringing a portion of the area's history colorfully to life on our walls."

In addition to the museum, the Chappell Hill Historical Society owns and maintains the Rock Store, the community's only stone commercial building, built in 1869; the Circulating Library, a Colonial Revival building constructed in 1893; the Brandt House, acquired in 1893; (Heinrich C. Brandt was a local cabinet maker, carpenter and merchant); and the Providence Baptist Church, built in 1873. All sites are within easy walking distance of the museum, and are opened for special events and pre-arranged group tours.

The town prides itself as the gateway to Texas history as there are many nuggets of history tying Chappell Hill to the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence.

"As part of Stephen F. Austin's original colony, Chappell Hill is part of Texas' birth story," said Ddughdhnemimier. "For such a small town, there is a lot of history here – and we're proud to be its voice."

AN HISTORICAL SNAPSHOT

Robert Wooding Chappell, a native of Tennessee, arrived in Texas in 1838 with his family and a pack of bear hounds. Acquiring land that was originally part of the William Munson league in Stephen F. Austin's original colony, he built a cotton plantation near the present-day community that bears his name.

His granddaughter, Mary Hargrove Haller, took on the role of community builder. As one of the few women in Texas to directly found and name a settlement, Haller purchased a 100-acre block of land on Feb. 2, 1847 and began surveying and laying out the town. The lots went on sale in 1849.

Chappell, credited with killing the last buffalo in Washington County in 1850, moved to what is now Milam County soon after to escape "encroaching civilization."

TRACING THE MUSEUM'S HISTORY

By the early 1960s, Chappell Hill's Circulating Library had fallen into disrepair. A concerned group of citizens began hosting arts and crafts shows to raise money for its repairs. The popular shows grew into the town's famous Bluebonnet Festival and Scarecrow Festival, which now attract about 40,000 attendees to each weekend event, and prompted the founding of the Chappell Hill Historical Society in 1966. ★



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Don't Miss! Annual Events:

Burton Cotton Gin Festival

*Third weekend of April, depending on
Easter holiday*

Texas Cotton Gin Museum:

Big Engine, Big Impact

Article by LORIE A. WOODWARD | Photos courtesy of TEXAS COTTON GIN MUSEUM

Residents within three miles of the Texas Cotton Gin Museum know when the Lady B, a 1925 Bessemer Type IV diesel oil engine that powers the Burton Farmers Gin, is fired up.

"The ground shakes when the Lady B is doing her work," said Museum Director Steph Jarvis, noting that the 125 HP engine, maintained by cotton ginning professionals from across Texas, is put into service each April at the Burton Cotton Gin Festival. "While there are older cotton ginning structures in the country, the Burton Farmers Gin is the oldest operational gin in the nation."

The gin, founded by 13 local farmers who raised \$10,000 by selling 200 shares, opened in 1914 and operated until 1974. The original structure, constructed from cypress wood without a set of blueprints, was designed and built by Edward and Will Weeren of Burton, while the ginning equipment was designed and built by the Lummus Cotton Gin Co. of Georgia.

"When it opened, the Burton Farmers Gin became the third in Burton – and one of 4,000 in Texas at the time," Jarvis said. "Our museum focuses on the era of the community cotton gin, which followed on the heels of the plantation era."

Today, the "Official Cotton Gin Museum of Texas" is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and designated as a Texas Recorded Historic Landmark and a National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark.

"Cotton has been part of the cultural and economic fiber of Texas since its earliest years," Jarvis said. "Even today, Texas produces more cotton than any



other state in the nation."

Through the years, cotton production shifted away from Washington County to the Brazos River bottom, the Blackland Prairies, Coastal Plains and the High Plains of Texas.

"Currently, there are only three farmers who produce cotton in Washington County," said Jarvis, noting that in the early 20th Century cotton from the Burton-area was loaded on a train and hauled to one of Texas' nearby ports for export.

The exhibits in the museum tell the story of cotton production to give context to the importance of the gin. The exhibits range from hands-on experience with cotton bolls, burrs and seeds to a look at sharecropping to a prototype of an early hand-cranked cotton gin.

According to Jarvis, historians believe that cotton has been cultivated for more than 7,000 years.

"Once wild, cotton spread across the world because fuzzy cotton seeds had the ability to float and traveled along the ocean currents," Jarvis said. "The smooth-

seeded cotton, known as pima or long-staple cotton, was carried from place to place by those who wanted to introduce it into new areas."

With about 28 seeds per four-lock boll, the eternal conundrum was how to remove the seeds and other "waste" from the fiber. Until Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1793, people removed the seeds by hand.

"Before the cotton gin, which was originally a hand-cranked machine about the size of a bread box, it took a person 10 hours of work to produce one pound of clean fiber," Jarvis said. "With the original cotton gin, a person could produce 50 pounds of clean fiber in the same 10 hours."

Whitney's original design, which relied on a series of serrated saw blades turning on a single axis, is the basis of the five 1925 Lummus Gin Stands that fill more than half of the second story of the Burton Farmers Gin.

"Whitney's original design was enlarged and motorized," Jarvis said. "When our gin was running at its peak, it could take 1,500 pounds of raw cotton from a farmer's wagon and produce a 500-pound bale of clean cotton every 12 minutes."

Before touring the gin, visitors watch a short film, "From Wagon to Bale," to see the Burton Farmers Gin in action.

"Anybody who loves the history of Texas or the history of old engines needs to come see us," Jarvis said. "In our gin, you can see how the Industrial Revolution stretched far beyond our cities and shaped the fabric of the countryside." ★



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Stirring the Pot

Article by
LORIE A. WOODWARD

Photos courtesy of
STACY FITZMORRIS PHOTOGRAPHY

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JW's Steakhouse

Jeff Wunderlich suggested I meet him at 3 p.m. at JW's Steakhouse, the Carmine-based restaurant he co-owns with his wife Kristi. "It should be quiet then," he said.

I arrived right on time. Although it was the lull between the lunch and dinner service, the restaurant was far from empty or quiet. Tables of patrons lingered over late lunches, obviously enjoying good food and the temporary escape from August's oppressive heat. People popped in and out picking up to-go orders. Laughter spilled from one of the event rooms where locals had gathered for their weekly card game.

Everything about JW's, from the rustic wood walls and casual décor to the friendly service (and the legendary homemade onion rings), invites people to "come as you are." And they do.



RTR: Who taught you how to cook?

JW: I don't cook very often. My mother is the cook. Even now, when we need her, she is always there. We couldn't do it without her.

RTR: What is the one thing the public doesn't understand about running a restaurant?

JW: Most people don't know how many hours it takes to run a restaurant. I'd call them extreme hours – we arrive at least two hours before we open and stay at least two hours after we close. Then, on Mondays, our day off, we're here from about 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. getting ready for the week.

RTR: What's the best advice you ever received about food or life?

JW: Mr. Jim Ellison, who owned Ellison's Greenhouses in Brenham, once told me, "Jeff, you'll never be able to make everybody happy no matter how hard you try, so you just do your best for everybody every day."

RTR: Meat or potatoes?

JW: I'm German – I like both.

RTR: What will never cross your lips?

JW: Squash, not even fried. My mother force fed me squash when I was little and I've never recovered. When squash is on the menu here, everybody laughs and says, "Hey Jeff, we fixed this just for you."

RTR: Do you have a favorite food memory?

JW: I used to love getting together with the whole Wunderlich family at my grandmother's. One of my uncles would barbecue chicken and we'd just have a big time.

RTR: What's the biggest challenge to running a restaurant?

JW: Finding enough employees in general and then knowing how to staff specifically. Even after 11 years, it's almost impossible to know which days will be busy and which days will be slow.

RTR: What's your favorite thing about the restaurant business?

JW: The people. I've met a lot of great customers who have become great friends. ★



The Recipe for a Restaurant

JW's Steakhouse was built on the cornerstones of community and family.

"Back in 2008, when my dad Larry Wunderlich designed and built the restaurant, Carmine didn't have one," Jeff said. "From the beginning, serving the community, by serving good food and supporting local causes, has been important to us."

At the time, Jeff and Kristi were living in Huntsville. After graduating from Round Top-Carmine High School in 1992, Jeff had attended Sam Houston State University, earning a bachelor's degree in Ag-Business and an MBA in 1999. Jeff was working as an accountant for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice as was Kristi, a native of East Texas, when they met and married.

"We got into the restaurant business because we were crazy – and because we were ready to come home," Jeff said, laughing.

Coming back home gave the Wunderlichs a strong base of support.

"Kristi and I couldn't have built this business without the help of our immediate and extended family, who, in the early years, did everything from working in the restaurant to babysitting our children, and our incredible staff, who go above and beyond for our customers every day," Jeff said.

While Jeff brought a background in business to the table, the couple were restaurant novices. Jeff had briefly worked in one restaurant before stepping into JW's.

"Our lack of experience was both good and bad," said Jeff, noting his dad served as the restaurant's consultant until his death in 2013. "Obviously, we had to learn as we went along, but we were much more apt to listen to people and take advice because we recognized that we didn't know everything."

He credits listening to customer feedback as one of the keys to JW's ongoing success.

"Obviously, you can't react to everything that everyone says, but if several people bring something to your attention, it

is worth taking a hard look at," Jeff said. "Our customers matter to us, so responsive, friendly customer service is something we work to deliver day in and day out."

From the beginning, the Wunderlichs put people first.

"JW's isn't pretentious," Jeff said. "We want people to come as they are, so it's common to see people in work clothes sitting right next to people in suits."

The friendly customer service and rustic country décor creates a welcoming atmosphere, where people can relax and enjoy the buzz-worthy, made-from-scratch American food. Everything on the extensive menu from the salad dressings to the cheeseburgers featuring hand-formed patties and the signature Certified Angus steaks is made in-house.

"All of the recipes we use came from my mom Colette, Kristi or our manager Michele Burrow," said Jeff, whose mother did a lot of the cooking during the restaurant's first year and still occasionally mans the kitchen when they're in a pinch.

The menu includes starters such as homemade onion rings and fresh-made potato chips; house and Caesar salads with shrimp or chicken; hot sandwiches and Certified Angus burgers; seafood including catfish, salmon, shrimp and oysters; country favorites such as chicken fried steak, hamburger steak, grilled pork chops and stuffed baked potatoes; and a large selection of cooked-to-order mesquite-grilled Certified Angus steaks, including a newly added 18 oz. prime bone-in ribeye.

"We're probably best known for our filets and ribeyes cooked over open mesquite, but our chicken fried steak is a big favorite, too," Jeff said.

While the entrees are their signatures, the homemade onion rings are legendary. The secret?

"I'm not sure there is a secret, unless it's the way that mom taught everyone how to batter them," Jeff said. "And we strain our



fryers twice a day, so the oil is fresh and clean. That's the only way to ensure a crisp, golden crust."

The restaurant also offers a selection of lunch entrees, daily lunch specials and kid's menu. The dining experience is rounded out with desserts including homemade pies, specialty cheesecakes and chocolate lava eruption cake.

Soft drinks, iced tea and coffee are available. Diners can also choose beer on tap or in bottles as well as wine. JW's earned the 2018 Wine Spectator Award of Excellence.

"We strive to have something for everybody," Jeff said. "We're as happy to serve a memorable cheeseburger as an exceptional prime bone-in ribeye because delivering what our customers want is our goal." ★



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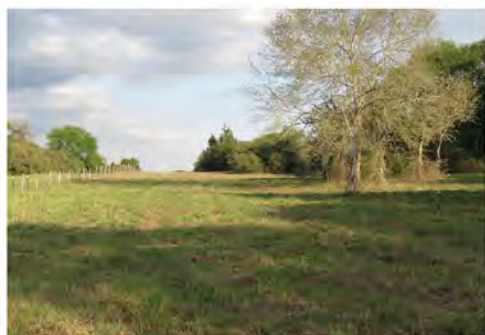
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JAN. 23-26, 2020

The Winter Show has grown from a handful of venues to more than 25 open during the last week of January. Some permanent antiques businesses extend their open dates as well.

SPRING ROUND TOP ANTIQUES SHOW*

MARCH 19 - APRIL 5, 2020

FALL ROUND TOP ANTIQUES SHOW*

SEPT. 17 - OCT. 4, 2020

*As always, consult Roundtop.com for the latest venue-specific dates. Not all venues are open from beginning to end.





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THE ROUNDTOPOLIS™

Texas Cotton Gin Museum Pages 28-29
PHOTO BY JERRY HAYES

Museums and Historical Sites of the Roundtopolis™

Compiled from publicly available info and Chambers of Commerce

The Roundtopolis™ is a made up word defining an area whose boundaries are generally the counties contiguous to Fayette, including Lee, Colorado, Austin, Washington, Bastrop and Lavaca.

Rich in history and with a strong sense of tradition and heritage, these counties are home to a number of museums and historical sites listed on the following pages in alphabetical order.

Editor's note: hours of operation were provided either by the museum, the local chamber of commerce or from the web. Please call ahead for accuracy. All likely will arrange group or special tours.

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Chappell Hill Historical Society Museum
Pages 28-29

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHAPPELL HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

BASTROP COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

904 W. Main St.

Bastrop

OPEN: Monday - Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday 1 - 4 p.m.

<https://www.bastropcountyhistoricalsociety.com/>

512-303-0057

BURTON RAILROAD DEPOT & MUSEUM

507 N. Main St.

Burton

FOUNDED: 1990 after depot restoration.

OPEN: First Saturday of the month; by appointment and during special events.

979-803-0393

www.burtonheritagesociety.org

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FOUNDED: 2011; Old Depot was built in the late 1800s.

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979-278-4200

www.carminetx.com

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9220 Poplar St.

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FOUNDED: 1966

HOURS: Wednesday-Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

and Sunday 1 - 4 p.m.

<https://chappellhillhistoricalsociety.com/>

979-836-6033

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260 N. Washington St.

La Grange

FOUNDED: 2006

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602 Washington St.
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FOUNDED: 1988
OPEN: By appointment
www.columbushst.org
979-732-8385

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CR 141, downtown Dime Box
FOUNDED: 1998
OPEN: Friday - Sunday, 1 - 5 p.m.
979-884-0182

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Saturday 10 a.m. to noon and 1 - 3 p.m.
361-865-3455
www.arnimmuseum.org

EAGLE LAKE DEPOT MUSEUM

322 East Main St.
Eagle Lake
FOUNDED: 2011
OPEN: 2nd and 4th Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
or by appointment.
www.eaglelakedepot.org
No phone number

EDWIN WOLTERS MEMORIAL MUSEUM

306 Ave I
Shiner
OPEN: Wednesday-Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. (closed from
noon - 1 p.m.) and Saturday noon - 4 p.m.
361-594-3774
www.woltersmuseum.org

ERNST MEMORIAL PARK

Schroeder Road, 2 blocks west of Ernst Parkway/FM 109
Industry
OPEN: Year round
STRUCTURES IN THE PARK: Republic of Texas Post Office
MARKERS: First Permanent German Settlement in Texas;
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Ernst, Jr., Son of the town founder



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National Museum of Prague

Pages 64-65

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PHOTO ARCHIVE OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM

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<http://www.cityoflg.com/departments/library.php>

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979-357-2772

HERITAGE PARK

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Sealy

STRUCTURES IN THE PARK: Old Old Sealy Jail;

Hackbarth House (ca. 1880s); Railroad Work Car

OPEN: By appointment

832-492-4244

HISTORIC CASINO HALL

254 N. Jefferson St.

La Grange

FOUNDED: built in 1881, renovated in 2014.

OPEN: Monday-Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.;

Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; and Sunday 12 - 5 p.m.

<http://visitlagrangetx.com/historic-casino-hall/>

979-968-3017

HISTORIC FAISON HOME

822 S. Jefferson St.

La Grange

FOUNDED: built in 1887, opened to the public in 1970s

OPEN: Saturday noon - 4 p.m.

<https://faisonhouse.org/>

INDUSTRY METHODIST CHURCH

1914 Main St.

Industry

OPEN: By appointment

979-357-2368

KNOLLE DOCTOR'S OFFICE MUSEUM

9021 Hwy 109 N.

Industry

OPEN: By appointment

979-357-2772

LAVACA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

1205 N. Texana

Hallettsville

FOUNDED: 1990

OPEN: By appointment.

361-798-4113

www.lavacahistoricalmuseum.org



LEE COUNTY MUSEUM

183 E. Hempstead
Giddings
FOUNDED: 1987
OPEN: Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
979-542-3455
www.Giddingstx.com

LEXINGTON LOG CABINS

524 Fourth St.
Lexington
FOUNDED: About 1976
OPEN: By appointment only.
979-773-8400

LINDEMANN STORE MUSEUM

2227 Main St.
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MONUMENT HILL & KREISCHE BREWERY STATE HISTORIC SITES

414 State Loop 92
La Grange
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dates to the late 1890s
OPEN: Daily 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
<https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/monument-hill-kreische-brewery>
979-968-5658

ROUND TOP AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

397 E. Mill St.
Round Top
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<https://roundtopareahistoricalsociety.weebly.com/>
979-249-5058

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(979) 885-2181

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Round Top Area Historical Society

Pages 16-17

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ROUND TOP HISTORICAL SOCIETY



SCHULENBURG HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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Schulenburg

OPEN: Friday & Saturday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

or by appointment

www.schulenburghistoricalmuseum.com

979-743-2403

TEXAS BASKETBALL MUSEUM

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<http://texasbasketballmuseum.com/>

713-898-7667

TEXAS CZECH HERITAGE AND CULTURAL CENTER

250 West Fairgrounds Road

La Grange

FOUNDED: 2009

CONTACT: Front desk, 888-785-4500

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Saturday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

<http://www.czechtexas.org/>

TEXAS HEROES MUSEUM IN THE OLD FAYETTE COUNTY JAIL

171 S. Main St.

La Grange

FOUNDED: 1994 (operated as a jail from 1883 through 1985)

OPEN: Friday & Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and

Sunday 1 - 4 p.m.

[https://www.visitfayettecounty.com/museums/](https://www.visitfayettecounty.com/museums/texas-heroes-museum)

[texas-heroes-museum](https://www.visitfayettecounty.com/museums/texas-heroes-museum)

TEXAS POLKA MUSEUM

625 N. Main St.

Schulenburg

OPEN: Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

www.texaspolkamuseum.com

979-743-4752

TEXAS QUILT MUSEUM

140 West Colorado Street

La Grange

FOUNDED: 2011

OPEN: Monday-Friday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and

Saturday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

<http://texasquiltmuseum.org/>

979-968-3104



TEXAS WENDISH HERITAGE MUSEUM

1011 CR 212

Serbin

OPEN: Tuesday - Sunday from 1 - 5 p.m.

<http://texaswendish.org/>

979-366-2441

THE HERITAGE SOCIETY MUSEUM OF WEIMAR

125 E. Main St.

Weimar

Founded: 1982

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www.weimartx.org

979-725-8804 or 979-725-8203

THE STANZEL MODEL AIRCRAFT MUSEUM

311 Baumgarten St.

Schulenburg

OPEN: Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday

from 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

979-743-6559

www.stanzelmuseum.org

WAR MEMORIAL MUSEUM

1101 Milam St.

Columbus

FOUNDED: 1962

OPEN: By appointment

www.columbushpt.org

979-732-8385

WELCOME HALL

9021 Hwy 109 N.

Industry

OPEN: By appointment

979-357-4749

WINEDALE

3738 FM 2714

Round Top

FOUNDED: 1967

OPEN: Monday-Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Sunday

noon - 4 p.m. Tours available for groups of 10 or more.

Call to schedule a tour.

www.cah.utexas.edu/museums/winedale.php

979-278-3530



Texas Wendish Heritage Museum

Pages 20-21

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TEXAS WENDISH HERITAGE MUSEUM
& LORIE A. WOODWARD



Book Mark

Article by
CHRISTINE BROWN,
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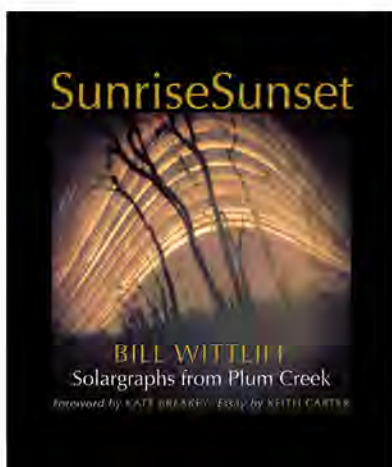
SunriseSunset:
Solargraphs from Plum Creek

Publisher:
Texas A&M University Press

Author: Bill Wittliff
ISBN # 978-1-62349-825-2
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SunriseSunset: Solargraphs from Plum Creek

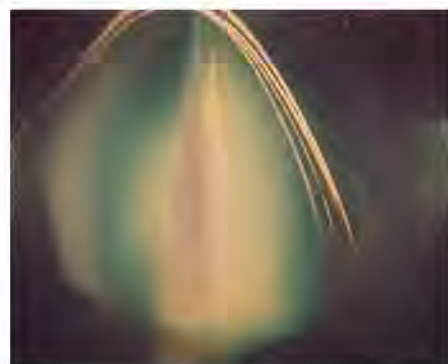
Taking a photograph doesn't always require a camera, a phone, or even a lens. A simple and early photographic technique is called a pinhole camera. All that's required is a light-proof box with a small hole in one side. Light from a scene passes through the aperture and projects an inverted image on the opposite side of the box.

For the past several years, photographer, screenwriter and author Bill Wittliff has been placing photographic paper inside beer cans, tubes made of PVC, and other cylindrical containers and affixing them to posts, trees and other vertical supports on his Plum Creek Ranch near Luling, Texas. Wittliff pokes pinholes in the containers and allows the sun to "paint" on the paper over periods that can last anywhere from a few days to a year. The resulting solargraphs are, as art photographer Kate Breakey suggests, a record of "the slow turning of the earth, without the details: the gradual passing of time at Plum Creek."

In *SunriseSunset: Solargraphs from Plum Creek*, this relentlessly inventive writer and artist has gathered some of his favorite creations, offering them as a visual tribute to the interaction of a particular place within the great arc of the cosmos. He shares with readers his delight upon discovering the technique through a chance encounter. He confesses an infectious enthusiasm for harvesting such unpredictable products of light and time as he roams with his canine companion Louie across a locale he describes as "a continuous miracle." To understand how and why pinhole photography works can get scientific, but as Bill puts it, "I'm not all that interested in the science of it. I just want it to work. I want to see new worlds on a piece of paper. I want to be surprised and amazed. I want to be astonished."

Kate Breakey's foreword sets an affectionate, thoughtful tone for this stirring artwork, followed by the literary observations of photographer, educator and artist Keith Carter. But the bulk of *SunriseSunset* is given over to page after page of mysterious, other-worldly, evocative images etched by "the slow turning of the earth" and the fertile imagination of the author. As Kate describes it, "So, what are these pictures of? Well, exactly whatever happened in those woods, or the pasture, or by the pond. Whatever that unblinking, wide-angle, insect-eye-size hole in a can "saw" for many months: everything, including the comings and goings of cows and deer, feral hogs and ducks, raccoons, birds, snakes, armadillos. Also, the moon and stars, wind and rain, leaves falling, seasons changing. But most of this happened too fast, and nothing is visible that wasn't bright enough – or didn't stay still long enough. So, in the end, there is only the sun's blinding path, burned into the sky, lighting the river and trees, plants, and some posts. In the end what was witnessed is just the slow turning of the earth, without the details – the gradual passing of time at Plum Creek.

Bill has also included detailed instructions on how to create a solargraph, so you too can, in Bill's words, "drink a beer, make some art." ★



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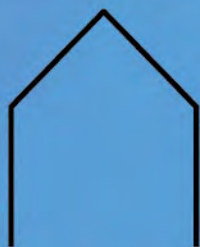
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Wildlife

Article by

DOUG JOBES

COASTAL PRAIRIES NATIVE SEED

PROJECT ASSISTANT

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-KINGSVILLE

Considerations for Planting Native Seed for Wildlife on Rights-of-Way

Many Texas landowners face energy rights-of-way on their property or an easement of some kind. In many cases landowners may be able to plant these disturbed areas with wildlife and pollinator-friendly plants. Native plants are beneficial to a host of wildlife and pollinator species, and while native seeds are readily available, there are several things that landowners should consider before purchasing. The Texas Native Seeds Program is a part of the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. The statewide effort is working to improve native seed availability and provide guidance on native habitat restoration. The program's goal is to ensure landowners interested in restoring native habitat understand the fundamental elements of the seed purchase.



WHAT NATIVES SHOULD YOU CHOOSE

Most landowners interested in planting natives already understand the importance of native plants for wildlife, however, many lack confidence in knowing what species to purchase for their project. This can become problematic when attempting to buy or specify native seed mixes because many don't realize or even know what species exist in their area. One easy way to determine what plant species would occur locally is to ask a Texas Native Seed staff member.

BE AN INFORMED CONSUMER

Not all commercially available seed is equal, and those buying native seed should be aware of this. Relying on second-hand information or other uninformed advice has led to lackluster results on many Texas properties.

The most expensive options often are advertised as "wild harvest," and while this may sound appealing, products labeled as "Texas native" or "wild harvest" should be closely examined for quality assurance. Products containing variety names listed as "native" or "VNS," which stands for variety not specified, should prompt consumers to ask more questions or reconsider the purchase all together. To gain more confidence in a quality purchase request a copy of the seed report analysis for each species in a mix. Information such as variety name, germination, viability, purity and other weed seed will help determine the quality of the potential purchase.

Understanding the need for regionally adapted species in restoration and reclamation plantings is a fundamental reason that Texas Native Seeds Program was initiated. This statewide program collects, evaluates and commercializes native species that are well suited for soil and climate conditions within the ecoregions of Texas. To date, about 40 releases have been developed by TNS, most of which are adapted to South Texas and adjacent regions. Recently, the statewide program is working towards releases within other regions, and several suitable seed options are available for most parts of the state. If you have questions or need assistance please email Coastal Prairies Native Seed Project- Assistant Director Doug Jobes douglas.jobes@tamuk.edu, or visit the TNS website at <https://www.ckwri.tamuk.edu/research-programs/texas-native-seeds-programs-tns> ★





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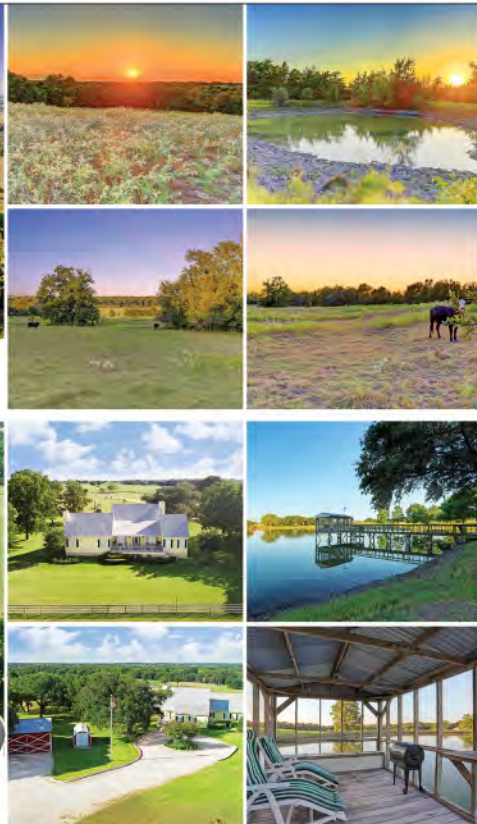


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On the Porch

Article and Photos by
ANITA JOYCE

Cedarhillfarmhouse.com

Anita Joyce has a city house in Houston, a country house near Shelby and a flair for French style. The former engineer is a wife and mother as well as a self-taught photographer, interior designer, blogger and online entrepreneur who founded *cedarhillfarmhouse.com* in 2011. Today that site has 80,000 unique visitors per month.



The Truth Will Set You Free

I knew I wasn't supposed to tell a lie, and I took it to heart. On the TV show 'Bewitched', when Samantha kept a secret from Darren, it always ended in disaster. Every 4 year old knew that. So when my mom got lost driving around town (it happened a lot) the first thing I did when my dad got home was to inform him of our unfortunate experience. "Well, we got lost again." I announced to anyone within hearing range. "And, yet again, we went the wrong way down a one way street." To my father's amusement, I blabbed every time we got lost.

My mom had a very different response. I think she had some murderous thoughts every time she was 'outed' by her preschooler, so she began to coach

keeping my mouth shut. The truth will set you free, that was my motto.

It was obvious that if you wanted to keep a secret, you could not tell little Anita. Not only did I have no filter, I felt almost compelled to spill the beans, any time I had any to spill. One day as I went with my mom to the beauty shop, I once again found it difficult to keep my mouth shut. Instead of getting her normal hairdo, my mom opted for something new. She normally got a beehive, but today she chose a style that didn't work for her face. My mom was disappointed in her new look, and instantly regretted it. She knew it looked bad, and didn't need any feedback from a pint-sized fashion critic. I imagine she grabbed the steering wheel and sighed, hoping for a quiet ride home. It wasn't going to happen, not on my watch. I took one look at her, then looked straight ahead. I said almost as if to myself, "Your hair looks terrible." As if talking to a peer instead of a four year old, my mom explained that she already knew it was dreadful and would never get her hair done like that again. I shrugged. It didn't really matter to me, I just felt that she needed to know.

My grandmother gave us a big starburst clock for Christmas that year. It was big! My grandmother was a woman of firm opinions, used to getting what she wanted. She told my parents exactly where they were to put the clock. My dad, also used to being in charge, decided to put it somewhere else. Little did they know that Anita was on the case. The next phone call with my grandma, they told her that the clock had been assembled and hung on the wall. Before another word came out of my dad's mouth, I spilled the beans. The clock was not in the 'correct' place. My parents had been folded once again. After giving me a few evil eyes, they moved it to the correct place. It was worse than having Alexa spying on you.

One day, my mom was upset because of a fight she had with my dad the day

me to keep my mouth shut. "We don't need to tell Dad everything, Anita. It can just be our little secret." I stared at her like she had horns growing out of her head. Why would you keep important information like that to yourself? It wasn't that I wanted to be mean, I just couldn't comprehend the concept of

before. It was a small house, so of course I had heard every word. The next time my mom and I were headed to the store, we were once again in the car alone together. I had an opinion, and I felt I needed to share it with her. I turned to her and stated in the most straightforward way, "You need to stand up to him. He's only running over you because you let him." And that was that. She did end up taking my advice, but it was much later.

Due to my overzealous honesty, I was not only a tattler and a critic, I now moved into the realm of the busybody. My honesty had officially become a fault rather than a virtue.

These days, I'm a reformed truth teller. I've realized that often it's best to keep some things to yourself. People don't really want to know if 'these jeans make my behind look fat', nor do they want to be told their child is not the smartest kid in the class. I've even created a personal rule that I don't offer unsolicited advice except under very rare conditions. I have found however, there are many ways to be honest and still kind. Rather than saying 'your hair looks terrible' I have learned to say, I think that

shirt looks great on you or I love your shoes, are they new? I'm still being honest, but not annoyingly so. Unless I'm asked about the 'bad hair', I've learned to look the other way.

Speaking of honesty, I've got to be honest with you. There are a few things people do that can make their homes look bad cheap less than their best. Here are a few things that might be shortchanging your home;

CURTAINS THAT DON'T GO TO THE FLOOR

If your curtains are not going to the floor, then you might want to replace them. You don't want them looking like high water pants. If your window is several feet from the floor, then one option is to replace the curtains with shades or blinds instead. Since shades are only supposed to be the height of the window, they will work perfectly with a window that is high on the wall.

RUGS THAT ARE TOO SMALL

We've all done it, setting out a rug that really isn't big enough for the space. It ends up making the room look skimpy. Try getting a rug that is large enough for your

living room for all of the chairs and sofa to sit on top of it. If you are using it in a dining room, you want it to extend several feet all the way around the table. For a bedroom, be sure the rug sits under the bed, and extends several feet on the sides and on the end of the bed. Bigger is almost always better.

USING ONLY OVERHEAD LIGHTING

Lighting affects the feel of a room so much, and overhead lighting can feel harsh. It's so important to have lamps or other lighting in your room. They will give the room ambiance and a cozy feeling at night. Also if you don't use incandescent bulbs, check to be sure the ones you use don't make the room look too blue.

CLUTTER

Clutter happens so quickly. We end up buying new things for our home over time, but never get rid of the old things. Then things stack up, and before you know it, the room feels like it doesn't breathe any more. Try to remove excess things from a room. Clear out the extra stuff sitting on the tables and on the floor. You will be amazed at how much more you will love your room. ★





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Round Top in 1970

Article by LONN TAYLOR

Lonn Taylor, known as the "Storyteller of Texas," was a historian who retired to Fort Davis, Texas after an illustrious career that included a 20-year stint at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History in Washington, DC. He lived in Round Top from 1970 to 1977 when he was director of the University of Texas at Austin's Winedale Historical Center. He wrote columns about Texas history for the Marfa Big Bend Sentinel and shared them with Central Texas readers on these pages. Taylor, who died in June, wrote the following column for the spring 2015 issue of Round Top Register. We will miss his wit and words.

Life was simpler in Round Top when I moved there in 1970. The Antiques Show took place on one weekend in April and consisted of 20 or so dealers who showed their wares in the Rifle Hall. There was no Royers Cafe with people waiting on the porch for tables; there were no Shops at Henkel Square; in fact, there were no shops at all. The Round Top General Store, on the north side of the square, supplied all our needs. There was no James Dick Festival Institute. Our entertainment consisted largely of drinking beer and telling each other stories. We made our own fun as the old folks said.

The town's two social centers were Birkelbach's Café, where Royers is now, and the Round Top General Store. Birkelbach's, owned by Herman Birkelbach and his hard-working wife, was where you took your mail and your newspaper after you picked it up at the post office in the morning and drank a cup of coffee and maybe ate a piece of pie. If you stayed for lunch, you enjoyed one of Herman's famous all-white lunches: chicken-fried steak drowned in white cream gravy, mashed potatoes and steamed cauliflower.

One of the regular morning customers was Fritz Frohm, a retired farmer in his 70s who liked to start his day with a cold bottle of Shiner beer. Fritz drove into town



from his farm on the Ledbetter Road every morning guiding his car with the steering wheel between his knees so he could play his harmonica while he drove. He never went over five miles an hour, and everyone knew to pull over if they saw him coming because he was blind.

If it was a Saturday morning, Willie Plumbeck might be in there wearing the metal hard hat covered with sequins that he had acquired when he worked on shrimp boats in the Gulf. People said that Willie was the happiest man they knew because it only took him three beers to have \$100,000 in the bank. Willie didn't drive at all because he didn't own a car.

He lived several miles out of town by the Florida Chapel Cemetery, and he would walk down to the highway and stand by the road until someone going into town stopped and picked him up. When he was ready to go home he would climb into one of the vehicles parked on the square and go to sleep. If it was your vehicle, you were obligated to drive him home. That was the custom.

The Round Top General Store was built in the 1850s and had been a mercantile store for more than a century. In 1970 it was owned by a widow, Mrs. von Minden, whose husband, Ernst, had bought it in the 1920s. Some of the merchandise predated the von Minden ownership.

The interior was a forest of goods: tables piled with work shirts and bib overalls, rubber boots, barrels filled with rakes and hoes, tubs and buckets hanging from the ceiling, shelves crowded with patent medicines like Alpenkrauter and Dr. J.H. McLean's Volcanic Oil. If you didn't see what you wanted, you would ask Mrs. von Minden for it, and she would immediately say, "Oh, no, we don't have none of those." Then she would pause and say, "Wait a minute, I think maybe Ernst bought some of those just before he died." Then she would step into a back room and come back with whatever you asked for.

I once went in there for a package of No. 2 pencils and went through the standard dialogue with Mrs. von Minden and was eventually handed a package of pencils from the back room. They had the words "Buy Liberty Bonds" embossed on them. They had been in that back room since World War I.

When Mrs. von Minden died, her sister, Annie Schatte, inherited the store. Annie turned it over to her son Odies and his wife Betty to run. Odies attracted customers by offering double-dip cones of Blue Bell ice cream at a nickel a cone, taking a loss on each cone but revitalizing the store. One of his regular customers was Richard Schill, one of the few Houston people who socialized with the locals. Richard had a pixie-like sense of humor. Many of the Houston people liked to pretend that they were ranchers; they had signs at their gates that said "Polled Herefords" or "Registered Charolais." Richard had a sign at his gate that said "Registered Moo Cows."

If you were in the general store on a Saturday morning, you might see Odies's uncle, Doc Knutzen, come in for his weekly change of socks. Doc was an old bachelor who had grown up in Round Top and retired to the family farm there after a career in dentistry. He wore the white socks with brown heels known as monkey socks (because you can make stuffed monkeys with them), and every Saturday about 10:00 a.m. he would come into the store, buy a new pair and then sit on the front porch, take his shoes off, pull his dirty socks off and toss them in the flower bed, pull the new ones on, put his shoes back on and go his way. Betty Schatte would retrieve the socks from the flower bed and put them in the garbage, holding them at arms length. She speculated that Doc slept in them.

There were other gathering places, too. Just down the Carmine Highway from the square was Merton Schulze's, a grocery store with a bar and two tables in the back. A group of men gathered there every weekday at 5:00 p.m. to share a few beers before going home to supper. One of them was Flunkie Sachs, a bachelor who drove a



bulldozer for the county.

One day a candidate for county commissioner came into Merton's while the 5 o'clock gang was sitting at the bar and said, "What'll you have, boys? I'm buying the next round." The man on the far end said he would have a can of Pearl, the next man ordered a can of Lone Star and so on down to Flunkie who said, "I believe I'll have a can of sardines." He reached up and took one off the shelf, put it in his pocket, and went out the door having ensured his dinner.

The store across the road from our house at Winedale, four miles out of town, was one of my favorite places, especially on Friday and Saturday nights when 20 or 30

people might show up for an evening of dominoes and conversation and perhaps bowls of stew if it was cold and someone felt like setting up the gas burner and pot.

One of the regulars was a high-school mathematics teacher named Wayne Neutzler who enjoyed posing puzzles to the other customers. One evening every table was occupied by people with strips of cardboard and piles of toothpicks trying to work out the old schoolbook conundrum about whether it takes more posts to build a mile of fence over a hill than it does across a level pasture.

On another occasion I came home from a trip to Austin to find a crowd standing around an old cotton scale on the store's front porch. Someone was holding a bucket of water, and someone else had a fish just pulled from the lake behind the store flopping on a line. Everyone had a bottle of beer in one hand. They had gotten into a discussion, provoked by Neutzler, about whether a fish weighs more in the water than it does on dry land, and now they were trying to decide whether to weigh the fish or the bucket of water first.

As I said, we made our own fun. ★





Gardening

Article by
CALVIN R. FINCH, PH.D.,
HORTICULTURALIST

Plants for Winter Gardens

You may have already planted snapdragons, stocks, dianthus, ornamental kale, sweet peas and calendulas in your winter flower garden. Now that it is November you can add pansies, cyclamen and primula to the list. We wait until November because these cool-weather annuals are more sensitive to October hot spells. In the winter vegetable garden spinach has a similar aversion to hot spells so we also wait to plant it.

Pansies and their close cousins violas and Johnny-jump-ups are among the most popular winter annuals. Pansies are available in clear-face or dark-faced versions with flowers in many shades of yellow, purple, white, orange, blue and bi-colors. Blooms are generally about two inches in diameter. Violas and Johnny jump-ups offer nearly the same colors but with smaller flowers.

Grow pansies in full sun in flower beds and containers. They are cold tolerant and not subject to a break in blooming like snapdragons in the coldest part of winter. Plants in the pansy family are a favorite deer snack so make sure there is a fence between the hungry browsers and these attractive winter bloomers. They don't eat as fast as deer, but snails and slugs also will feed on low-growing pansies so be generous with the slug and snail bait.

Cyclamen has long been recognized as a spectacular indoor blooming plant. The intense red, pink, white and several versions of lavender color presented on the waxy, etched foliage is a favorite "get well" plant. It is being used more and more for decorating winter flower beds and deep-shade containers. Planted now the blooms will be constant until April. Colors can be mixed but the impact is most showy when cyclamen is planted in single-color beds. The color of the blooms and handsome foliage is unmatched, but so is the price of individual plants! Cyclamen foliage is unfazed by cold, but blooms can be knocked off by temperatures lower than 28 degrees F. Have a piece of Insulate or other fabric ready to cover plants if temperatures of under 28 degrees are forecast.

Primula (primrose) have a growth habit like pansies (low and spreading) but in addition to growing in shade, primula are more intensely colored, and the foliage is crinkly. Use primula for containers and intimate gardening beds in deep shade. Primula are a favorite food for slugs and snails so have the slug and snail bait ready to apply at planting and every two weeks after that.

In the vegetable garden, spinach has the same sensitivity to hot spells that pansies, cyclamen and primula have. It can also be planted now. Transplants are available in 2-inch and 4-inch containers. Smaller transplants are less expensive, but the larger plants start with a larger root system plus have more foliage to survive initial attacks by cutworms and snails.

Plant spinach transplants 6 to 12 inches apart and keep them well fertilized. Spinach is not as productive as chard, collards, kale and other greens, so plant more to meet your family's needs. Sixteen plants are not too many to meet the needs of a small family. ★



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NATIONAL MUSEUM OF PRAGUE



National Museum of Prague: A Texan's Visit

Article by KATIE D. STAVINOHA | Photos courtesy of PHOTO ARCHIVE OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM

Publisher's note: The Roundtopolis™ is home to dozens of museums – from large to small. That rapport with history and preservation is evident. In August, my Czech husband, my daughter and I visited Prague – and Ostrava, which is in the Moravian part of the country. As noted in the article about the Czech Heritage Center in La Grange, many of the local Czechs originated from that area in the mid- to late 1800s. We took a day to visit the National Museum, which is in Prague.

Prague's National Museum is in a relatively modern building, having been built in the 1840s. Many of its neighbors have a couple of centuries on the building. Striking about its interiors are the marble columns and vividly adorned ceilings – that you can see are similar to those in the painted churches that dot the Fayette County countryside.

A video history of the museum portrays the many evolutions of time and challenges the current building faced in being built originally – and then elsewhere. The building was damaged by a bomb in 1945 during World War II, but collections were spared. During our visit, an entire room was dedicated to the Czechs who had served in the Royal Air Force during the war. Many of the surnames found in the displays are found in local communities: Svrcek, Bohuslav, Bartos, Polasek, Vitek, etc. These Czechs had fled Hitler's regime, generally into France.

The museum was damaged again in 1968 during the Warsaw Pact intervention. Soviet machine guns destroyed statues and created holes in

the sandstone pillars and plaster. That damage is evident today because the repairs used lighter sandstone than the original building materials.

The museum includes five separate entities: Natural History Museum, Historical Museum, National Museum Library, Czech Museum of Music and Naprstek Museum.

During our visit, which included the time spent with the Royal Air Force exhibit, a vast collection of displays covered a wide range of artifacts – most surprising was the wedding dress of Napoleon Bonaparte's wife.

The National Museum is only one of dozens of museums to see in Prague. Others include the Franz Kafka Museum, the Museum of Communism, the Jewish Museum, and the Museum of Beer. ★





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