



# Main Street ! Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

JULY 2012 • COMMUNITY HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION • P.O. BOX 12276, AUSTIN, TX 78711 • 512.463.6092

## Spotlight on Waxahachie

(Population approx. 29,535)

### The Preservation Month that Was

Waxahachie has long had a strong preservation ethic, which has led to the existence of many intact historic homes and commercial buildings. Waxahachie's heritage and our historic building stock is celebrated in many ways and during Preservation Month 2012, there were new reasons to celebrate.

Each year for Preservation Month in May the City Council issues a proclamation encouraging all citizens to join in celebrating Waxahachie's heritage and to participate in its preservation. The Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) carries that a step further by distributing coloring books of some of the most iconic historic properties to all second graders in the Waxahachie Independent School District (WISD). Normally the Heritage Preservation Officer delivers the coloring books to the WISD administration building and they are distributed to the individual schools.

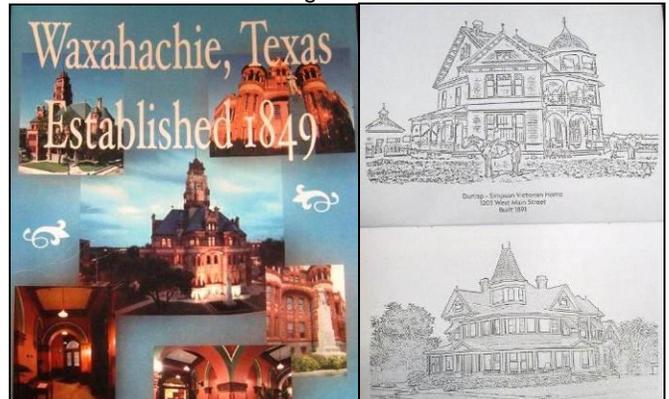
This year the HPC members wanted to deliver the books themselves

and tell the students about the importance of preservation and their role in helping to preserve our heritage.

Permission was received from the school district to go into the individual schools at the invitation of each principal. Two principals requested delivery of the coloring books to the students at their schools. The rest of the books were taken to the administration building and sent out through their system.

The visits to the schools could not have gone better! The commission member that went to the first school charmed the students and teachers alike with her stories of past generations of her family in Waxahachie (which date back to the 1840's) and how the movie *Places in the Heart* was written by her cousin and

Historic Waxahachie coloring book



Forward (in the coloring book)

May is National Historic Preservation Month. Historic preservation is needed to save and protect valuable buildings and places.

Our city of Waxahachie has many beautiful old houses and buildings. A number of them were built 100 years ago and have decorations on the outside that we call "gingerbread". In fact, Waxahachie is known as the "Gingerbread City"...

On the square in downtown Waxahachie is a building that looks like a castle. That building is the Ellis County Courthouse. This very important building has been restored both inside and outside so all of us can enjoy it for many years to come...

There are pictures of these buildings and some other important structures in this coloring book. It is our hope that learning about these historic places in our own town will make you want to take part in protecting them...

*Waxahachie Heritage Preservation Commission*

based on her grandmother. She also told stories about the school's namesake who was her principal when she was a little girl growing up in Waxahachie and answered

dozens of questions posed by the students.

The second school visit was to an elementary school named after the commission member's mother-in-law, Mrs. Margaret Felty. When her name was announced, the students all gasped like she was a rock star. When she told them that the boy in the photo of the school's namesake that hangs prominently in the hall was Mrs. Felty reading to her husband they were hooked and so were the teachers. It was great to see those young minds begin to grasp the heritage, history, and importance of preservation. It was also rewarding for me, the Main Street Manager, to be able to gain a better understanding of and appreciation for the deep roots members of the local Heritage Preservation Commission have in this community and why they are so passionate about protecting it.

On May 17, 2012, College Street Printing celebrated 125 years in business in downtown Waxahachie. Kenneth Denny, the owner since 1993, spent two years researching long-term businesses in Texas. He gathered information from the Texas State Comptroller's office, many county clerks, former employees and relatives of business owners, and others. After hundreds of phone calls and many miles traveled he was able to determine that College Street Printing is the oldest business in Waxahachie and Ellis County continually operating from the same building in the same location. It is the second oldest in Texas with that distinction.

The business started as a weekly newspaper in 1881 and added printing services when it was purchased by Thomas Middleton on May 17, 1887. The name of the business at that time was Middleton Printing. The newspaper part of the



Owners of College Street Printing celebrating 125 years in downtown Waxahachie

Top: Boyd Box, Stephanie Starrett, and Kenneth Denny (Stephanie Starrett is the great-great-grand daughter of former owner Thomas Middleton)

Bottom: Kenneth Denny, owner/operator of College Street Printing and Waxahachie mayor N.B. "Buck" Jordan

business was sold to John P. Cooper in 1911, but the Middletons retained the printing business and the family continued to operate it for 76 years.

In 125 years of existence, the business has had only four distinct family owners. Two generations of the Middleton family ran the printing business until 1963 when the company was sold to Ralph Robins and became Robins Printing Company. In 1974, the company was purchased by Boyd Box and renamed Box Printing and Advertising. Kenneth Denny, the current owner, purchased the business from Mr. Box in 1993 and named the business College Street Printing Co.

He brought the business into the new era with computers and new printing technology and also added design services.

At a celebration for the business held on May 24, 2012, College Street Printing was issued a proclamation from Waxahachie mayor N.B. "Buck" Jordan congratulating them on 125 years in business and praising Mr. Denny for his diligence in documenting the history of the business. Three of the four owners were represented at the event—Boyd Box, Stephanie Starrett (great-great-grand daughter of founder Thomas Middleton), and current owner Kenneth Denny.

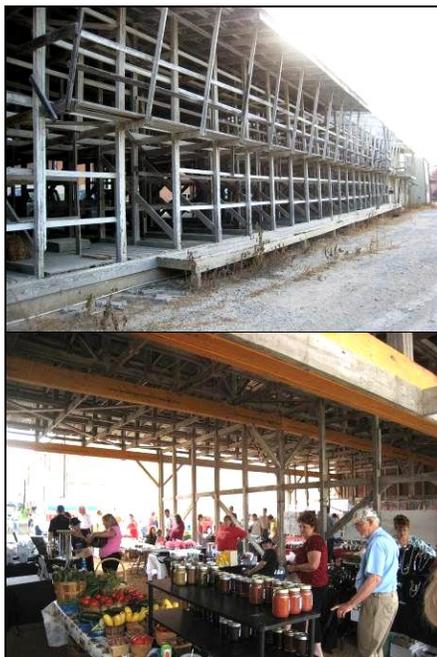
Another very positive preservation month achievement was the relocation of the Waxahachie Downtown Farmers Market to their new permanent home. The city took the abandoned city-owned lumber yard building across the street from City Hall and adapted it to house the Farmers Market. The scorching heat of last summer made it apparent that the best place for the vendors (and the customers) was not on the street. For the last 6-8 weeks of the season the market moved to Singleton Plaza where some shade trees and cover were available. That was good for a temporary solution, but the Market could not take over use of the public parking facility long term.

During a site visit to Waxahachie in 2008, Wayne Bell, now-retired architect with the Texas Historical Commission, was the first one to suggest that the abandoned lumber yard with its racks and stalls that used to hold lumber and other building supplies would be a great place to put the Farmers Market. He saw it as a relatively simple adaptive reuse project to turn the back part of the lumber yard into a

covered open air pavilion for the vendors.

With the economy showing some signs of recovery over the last year, the city council voted to fund the first phase of the project, which consisted of converting the back part of the lumber yard into a permanent home for the Farmers Market. The project was completed in May and the first market was held in the new space on May 26. Vendors and customers alike are extremely happy with the new location. The shopping environment is much more enjoyable and it has opened up many new opportunities. The vendors have already added a Wednesday evening market in addition to Saturday mornings and there are plans for a holiday market during the Christmas season. Vendor applications have reached an all-time high and sales are going in the same direction.

It is no longer necessary to close any streets, disrupt any businesses,



The abandoned lumberyard in downtown (top) has been repurposed into the downtown farmers market.

**austin historical survey wiki** beta

**Wiki statistics**

Places:	2859
Images:	3178
Documents:	908
Users:	185
Survey Efforts:	11

The Austin Historical Survey Wiki is a new interactive tool for the City of Austin. The Wiki allows you to find and contribute information about historic buildings, sites, and landscapes of the past and present that tell the history of Austin. A historical survey is a way to research, identify, and share information. The Wiki is a living survey database where information from previous historical surveys can be accessed and new information can be contributed by Wiki users. The Austin Historical Survey Wiki is a resource for planning Austin's future and sharing its history.

Search Places to see what has been added to the Wiki. Create a login to add or edit places. Read more about the project on the Wiki User Guide.

**50 Most Recently Added Places**

Map data ©2012 Google - Terms of Use

Austin Historical Survey Wiki web page <http://beta.austinhistoricalsurvey.org>

or deal with cars left in the market area. There is plenty of room for the market to grow and if things go well, phase two will involve rehabilitating the building that fronts the market area. The indoor space would provide restrooms and allow for even more market days as weather and fluctuating temperatures would not be an issue. It could also provide vendors with fragile merchandise the opportunity to leave their products in place instead of packing up and moving them each week. There is also the possibility of the eventual development of a community grocery store downtown.

Many positive forces from many different resources truly made May 2012 in Waxahachie the preservation month that WAS!

*Thanks to Anita Williamson, Waxahachie Main Street Manager for providing this article.*

## FOCUS ON MAIN STREET DESIGN

### Why Historical Surveys Matter for Texas Main Streets and Austin's Wiki Experiment

Conducting historical surveys can assist planning efforts and galvanize support for the preservation of the unique history and architectural character of Texas Main Streets. Downtowns and Main Streets can include assets that can remain overlooked. It is good practice to use historical surveys to create an inventory of historic resources. Community leaders embark on historical surveys for many excellent reasons. Here are a few reasons that top the list:

1. Historic properties are valuable community assets. You need to know what you have in order to plan for the future.
2. Surveys form the basis for designation of local and national historic districts. Designations can make rehabilitation tax credits available and feed into

The screenshot shows the 'austin historical survey wiki' interface. At the top, there are navigation links: Search Places, Add a Place, User Guide, Forum, and Contact. Below this is a header for the specific location: 201 E 10TH STREET, 78701, with coordinates 30.271107, -97.739965 and a 'Building' label. A photo of St. Mary's Cathedral is displayed. Below the photo is a table with four columns: General Information, Significance and Designations, History, and Architectural Features. The table contains several rows of data, including 'Overview', 'Travis Central Assessors District ID', 'Survey Effort', 'Owner', 'Legal Description', and 'Existing or Demolished/Moved from this location'. Each row has a status indicator on the right, such as 'unreviewed' or 'Preservation Office Review'.

Individual web page for a specific location. Photos and additional information can be added by any registered user.

Photos and additional information can be added by any registered user.

- 3. Surveys can be useful for emergency planning and response.
- 4. Surveys are useful in assessing the impacts of federal projects such as transportation improvements.

- 5. Information gleaned from historical surveys can be used for heritage markers; hard copy, web, and mobile tours; and other forms of marketing. Surveys create a solid foundation of information that can be used to promote heritage tourism and for economic development efforts.

- 6. People are proud of their hometowns and recognizing local history can contribute to a sense of place and community.

A research project out of the University of Texas at Austin has re-envisioned how historical surveys can be accomplished and maintained over time. A team of faculty, graduate students, and professional staff at the UT Schools of Architecture and Information created a concept for a web tool to assist in the survey of historic resources in Austin, from downtown along Congress Avenue all the way to its city limits. The Austin Historical Survey Wiki was then developed for the City of Austin Historic Preservation Office and tested in pilot neighborhoods. It was launched on June 4, 2012. The Wiki is an experiment in new ways to accomplish surveys, disseminate the results, and maintain it on a continual basis. Visit the website at <http://beta.austinhistoricalsurvey.org>.

The Wiki displays information on the history and architecture of nearly 3,000 buildings and other kinds of historic places, from historic bridges to sidewalk inscriptions. Any registered user can contribute photos, documents, and information. Once moderated (usually within 24-48 hours), this information is published immediately. Most of the information available on the Wiki comes from professionally conducted surveys completed during more than 30 years. Some comes from volunteers researching their neighborhoods with the aim of establishing local historic districts. Additional information comes from interested Austinites sharing information and photos of places they consider important. Austin's approach is unique in that it focuses on establishing web infrastructure that supports historical

surveys as an ongoing process. The vision is a living inventory of historic places that can accommodate routine changes better than a final report that, once complete, would be automatically frozen in time and out-of-date as soon as printed. It provides a way for the City of Austin Historic Preservation Program to make official information available, while supporting residents who may be quicker in noticing change in their neighborhood.

The Wiki has the potential to recognize a greater variety of historic resources and glean information that may only be accessible when citizens have a chance to participate. Professional survey methods will be better able to capture the places people care about when there is a means for people to share their knowledge with each other. This website provides a place for professionals, community leaders, and citizens to work together to identify and share information about the places that matter.

The Austin Historical Survey Wiki was funded through a Certified Local Government grant from Texas Historical Commission with additional support from the City of Austin, the Preserve America program of the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Parks Service, and the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training.

*Thanks to Jenni Minner, PhD Candidate and Michael Holleran, Director of the Graduate Program in Historic Preservation at the University of Texas at Austin for providing this article.*

## NEWS

### Measuring the Economic Impact of Special Events

Many Main Street cities are interested in collecting data regarding

the economic impact of special events on their local communities. Is your city getting a good return on its investment? The May/June issue of *Main Street NOW* [www.preservationnation.org/main-street/main-street-now/main-street-now-pdfs/members-only/Main-Street-Now-PDF\\_2012\\_05-06.pdf](http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/main-street-now/main-street-now-pdfs/members-only/Main-Street-Now-PDF_2012_05-06.pdf) has an extensive article on this featuring two Mississippi cities and their efforts. There are also complete reports including the tools used for these surveys at the Main Street Solution Center at [www.preservationnation.org/main-street/resources/](http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/resources/).

### MAIN STREET AROUND THE STATE

#### Denison

Congratulations to Denison for being named one of the "16 Best Summer Drives" in Texas for its thriving downtown and detailed history in the June issue of *Texas Monthly*.

#### La Grange

Congratulations to the Texas Quilt Museum in downtown La Grange for receiving a Historic Rehabilitation Award (one of only 10 awards) for successful rehabilitation during the Annual Honor Awards program presented by Preservation Texas.

#### Vernon

See the latest on a series of rehabilitations in downtown Vernon at [www.timesrecordnews.com/news/2012/jun/25/vernon-building-returning-to-glory/](http://www.timesrecordnews.com/news/2012/jun/25/vernon-building-returning-to-glory/) Vernon, a 2011 Texas Main Street city has already issued numerous façade grants in this short time in efforts to revitalize downtown. Main Street Vernon is also very good at getting the word out as is evidenced in this

article in the *Times Record News* out of Wichita Falls.

Also in Vernon, hundreds of shoppers enjoyed shopping for fruits, vegetables and home-made goodies from more than a dozen local vendors at the opening day of the new Vernon Farmers Market (a year in the making and planning) on May 19th.

## EVENTS

If you would like one of your Main Street events posted here, email [jill.robinson@thc.state.tx.us](mailto:jill.robinson@thc.state.tx.us) at least three weeks ahead of the month in which you want the posting.

### July 4, Elgin

Push, Pedal, Pull and Pets is the theme of the annual parade and celebration held each year on the Fourth of July. The parade will begin at City Hall, 310 North Main with a program following at Veterans' Memorial Park and a Soap Box Derby exhibition by the local Cub Scouts. For more information on this event, contact the Elgin Parks and Community Development Department at 512-281-5724 or visit [www.elginpard.com](http://www.elginpard.com).

### July 14, Weatherford

Take a trip back to yesteryear at the 28th annual Parker County Peach Festival, held in historic downtown (30,000 attendance was estimated last year.) There will be an art show, food vendors, childrens' activities including mini-train rides, the annual peach pedal bike ride, and a 42 domino tournament. There will be three stages full of entertainment during the festival. Food offerings will include home-made peach ice cream, peach snow cones, fresh peach cobbler, and more. For more information see [www.peachfestivaltx.com/geninfo.html](http://www.peachfestivaltx.com/geninfo.html).

## **SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS/ WEBINARS**

### **League of Historic American Theaters Conference**

With the theme Celebration of the Past, Innovation for the Future, the 36th annual League of Historic American Theatres conference and theatre tour will be held **July 18–21** in San Diego, Calif. Conference sessions will range from successful fundraising strategies to cutting edge LED lighting and how to convert to digital cinema. See [www.lhat.org](http://www.lhat.org)

### **Texas Friendly Train the Trainer Hospitality Workshops**

Become a certified Texas Friendly instructor through this hospitality workshop comprised of two half-day sessions that provide the best tools to take back to one's community regarding customer service. The workshops will be:

**Falfurrias, Aug. 22-23**  
**Athens, Oct. 16-17**  
**Rockwall, Oct. 18-19**

Cost is \$200 for new instructors (both days); \$100 for current instructor 'refresher' (1<sup>st</sup> day only). Free registration to AgriLife Extension staff. To find out more about the program and to register, visit the Texas Friendly Hospitality website at: <http://agrilife.org/texasfriendly/workshops> or call 979.845.0869.

### **CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS**

The National Main Street Center has issued a call for presentations for the National Main Streets Conference in New Orleans April 14–

16, 2013 with the theme “Main Street and the Cultural Economy.” The collision of heritage tourism, the arts, and entrepreneurship on Main Street can spark a “Big Bang”—one of a thriving cultural economy. This year, the conference will explore the Creative Economy, seeking out ways in which local communities and regions can benefit from leveraging the ideas, the people, and the unique assets that set them apart. Applications are due **August 16**. For details, see [www.preservationnation.org/main-street/training/conference/2013neworleans/2013-content-development.html](http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/training/conference/2013neworleans/2013-content-development.html)

### **AWARD SUBMISSIONS 2013 First Lady's Texas Treasures Awards**

The THC is currently accepting applications for the 2013 First Lady's Texas Treasures Award. Community representatives can apply or be nominated based on criteria listed on the nomination form, available at [www.thc.state.tx.us/awards/awdFirstLdyTxTrs.shtml](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/awards/awdFirstLdyTxTrs.shtml). A completed form and supporting documentation are due by **August 31, 2012**.

Through the award, Texas First Lady Anita Perry, acting as honorary chair in partnership with the THC, honors communities that have shown a high level of creativity and ingenuity in recognizing and preserving their authentic Texas sense of place. These communities use the resources and preservation tools available from the THC and others to realize significant economic benefits as a result of their strong cultural and historic preservation stewardship.

Designated communities receive special signage and a DVD promoting their cultural resources. To see video clips of the award-winning communities since 2009, visit [www.thc.state.tx.us/heritagetourism/htflta.shtml](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/heritagetourism/htflta.shtml).

For further information contact April Garner, State Coordinator, Texas Heritage Tourism Program at 512.463.2630.

### **GRANTS Anice Read Fund**

The Anice Read Fund awards grants to Texas Downtown Association (TDA) members seeking funding for downtown projects, program development and staff development.

The fund, initiated in 1999 by TDA past presidents, honors the legacy of Anice Read, former commissioner of the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and founder of both TDA and Texas Main Street. Since 2000, more than \$50,000 has been distributed to member cities, leveraging more than \$4 million from other funding sources.

Applications for the 2012 grant cycle are due **Friday, August 31**. See [www.texasdowntown.org/anice-read-grants.html](http://www.texasdowntown.org/anice-read-grants.html)

### **APPLICATIONS**

The Texas Main Street Program is accepting applications for entrance into the program in 2013. See [www.thc.state.tx.us/](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/) for details. Application deadline is Tuesday, July 31.

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## Calendar of Events

- **Nov. 6–9, 2012, Wichita Falls**  
Texas Main Street/Texas Downtown Association Annual Conference
  - **Apr. 14–16, 2013, New Orleans**  
National Main Streets Conference, theme: *Main Street and the Cultural Economy*
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## Websites of Interest

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: [www.achp.gov](http://www.achp.gov)  
African American Heritage Preservation Foundation: [www.aahpfdn.org](http://www.aahpfdn.org)  
(The) Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation: [www.ahlp.org](http://www.ahlp.org)  
(The) American Institute of Architects: [www.aia.org](http://www.aia.org)  
American Planning Association: [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)  
American Society of Landscape Architects: [www.asla.org](http://www.asla.org)  
(The) Cultural Landscape Foundation: [www.tclf.org](http://www.tclf.org)  
(The) Handbook of Texas Online: [www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online](http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online)  
Keep Texas Beautiful: [www.ktb.org](http://www.ktb.org)  
League of Historic American Theatres: [www.lhat.org](http://www.lhat.org)  
National Main Street Center: [www.preservationnation.org/main-street](http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street)  
National Park Service: [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)  
National Trust for Historic Preservation: [www.preservationnation.org](http://www.preservationnation.org)  
Texas Department of Rural Affairs: [www.tda.state.tx.us](http://www.tda.state.tx.us) (TDRA has now become the Office of Rural Affairs within the Texas Department of Agriculture)  
Partners for Sacred Places: [www.sacredplaces.org](http://www.sacredplaces.org)  
Preservation Easement Trust: [www.preservationeasement.org](http://www.preservationeasement.org)  
PreservationDirectory.com: [www.preservationdirectory.com](http://www.preservationdirectory.com)  
Preservation Texas: [www.preservationtexas.org](http://www.preservationtexas.org)  
Project for Public Spaces: [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)  
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy: [www.railstotrails.org](http://www.railstotrails.org)  
Scenic America: [www.scenic.org](http://www.scenic.org)  
Texas Commission on the Arts: [www.arts.state.tx.us](http://www.arts.state.tx.us)  
Texas Downtown Association: [www.texasdowntown.org](http://www.texasdowntown.org)  
Texas Folklife Resources: [www.texasfolklife.org](http://www.texasfolklife.org)  
Texas Historical Commission: [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us)  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department: [www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)  
Texas Rural Leadership Program: [www.trlp.org](http://www.trlp.org)  
Texas State Preservation Board: [www.tspb.state.tx.us](http://www.tspb.state.tx.us)  
Urban Land Institute: [www.uli.org](http://www.uli.org)

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