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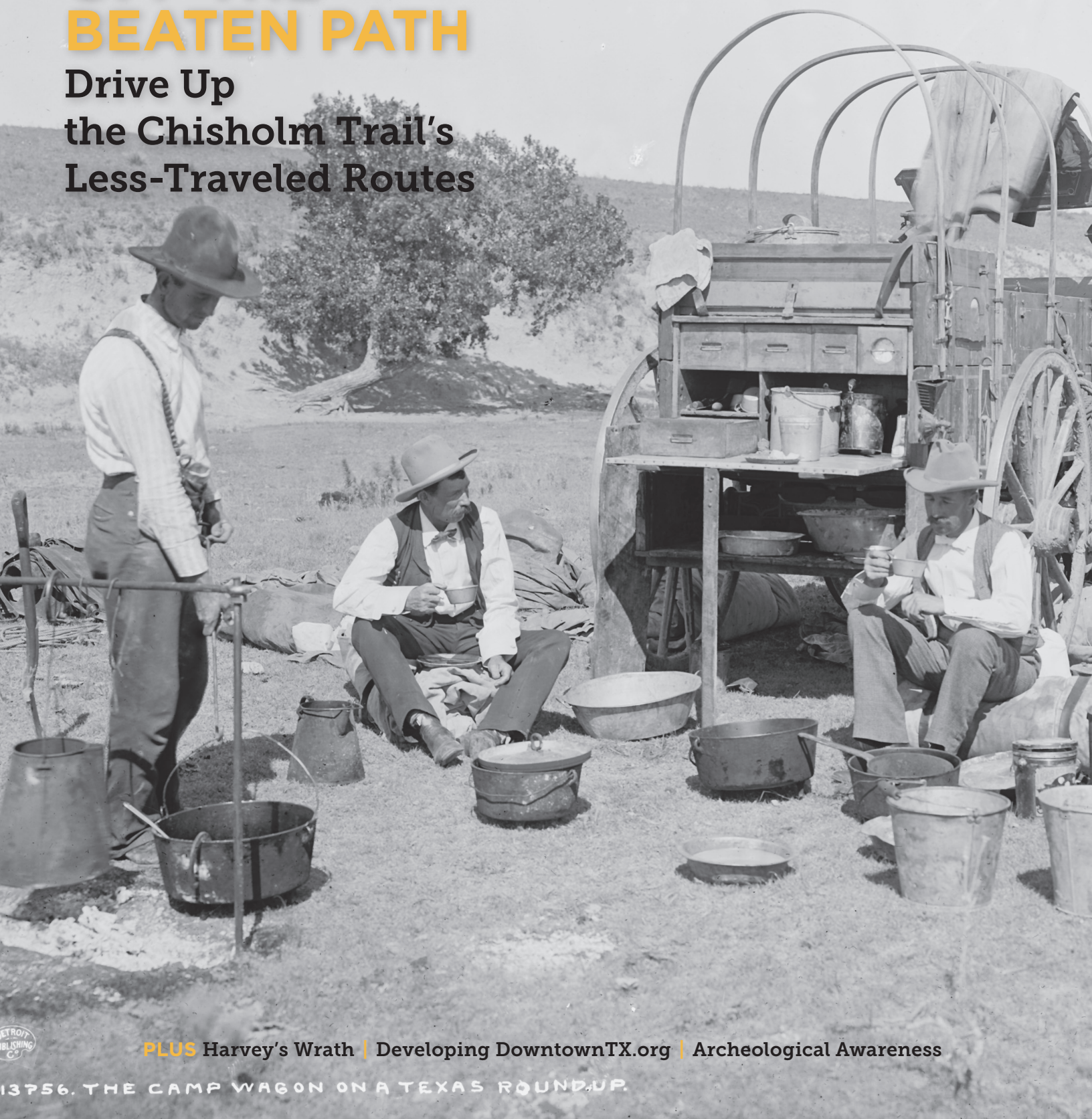
TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

MEDALLION

FALL 2017

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Drive Up
the Chisholm Trail's
Less-Traveled Routes



ETROV
PUBLISHING
Co.

PLUS Harvey's Wrath | Developing DowntownTX.org | Archeological Awareness

13756. THE CAMP WAGON ON A TEXAS ROUNDUP.



ON THE COVER: Texas cowboys with a chuck wagon.
Photo: Library of Congress.

PAGE 6

A medallion for the Silver Spur Saloon in Roanoke.
Photo by Andy Rhodes.



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Our Mission

To protect and preserve the state's historic and prehistoric
resources for the use, education, enjoyment, and economic
benefit of present and future generations.

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TEXAS SENATOR CHARLES SCHWERTNER LEADERSHIP LETTER

Dear Friends,

I'm proud to represent Texas Senate District 5, which encompasses much of the Texas Historical Commission's Brazos Trail Region. This region is brimming with Texas heritage, and I often engage with people about our shared appreciation for the many facets of Texas history in this part of the state.

One of my favorite eras of our region's past is the Chisholm Trail period. For several decades in the late 1800s, millions of cattle traversed the area guided by skilled cowboys. This helped establish the foundation for our state's iconic cattle industry. The trail's legacy endures at travel destinations throughout the region, including the Williamson Museum in my hometown of Georgetown.

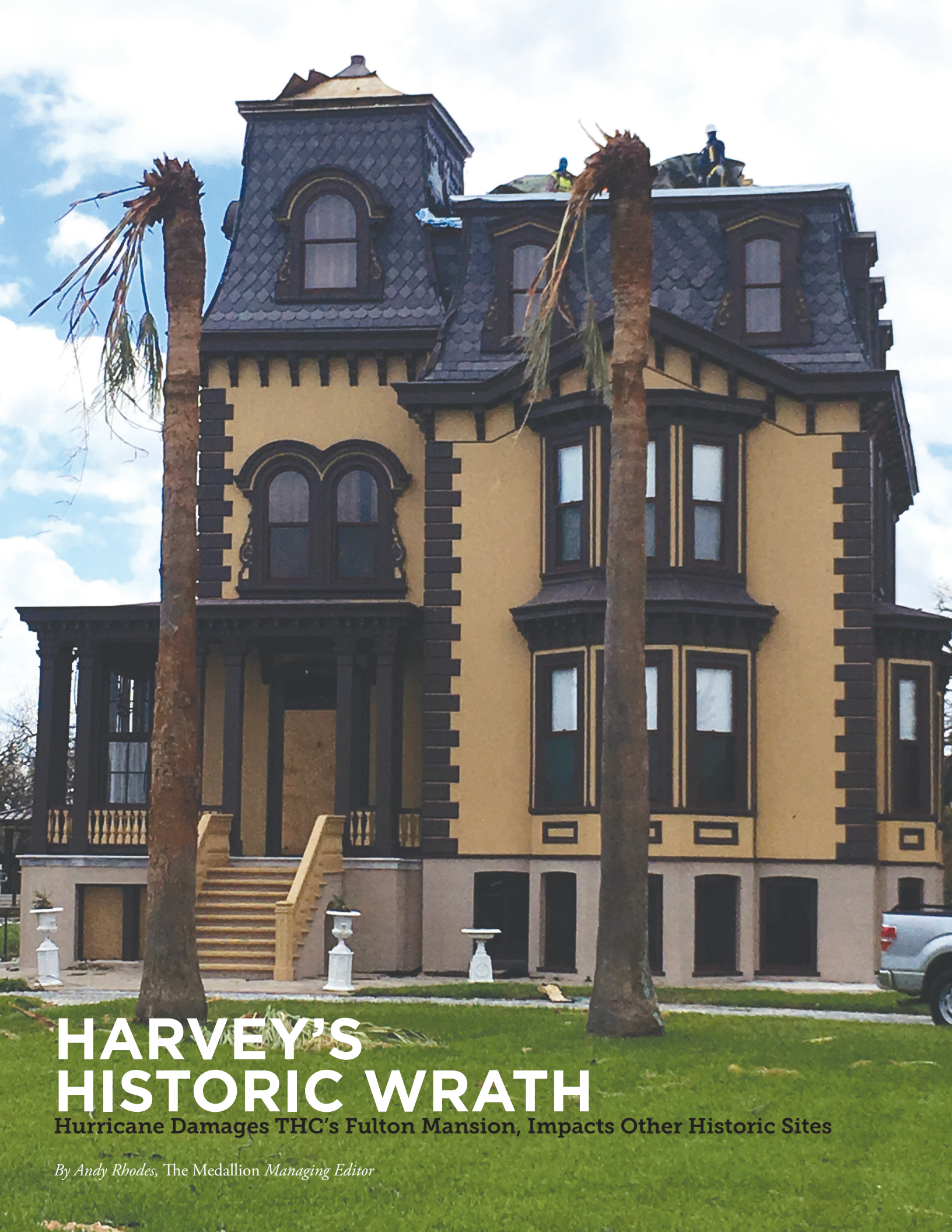
Another significant trail in the area is El Camino Real de los Tejas, which crosses the entirety of Senate District 5. I'm also proud that SD-5 includes historical destinations such as the THC's Confederate Reunion Grounds State Historic Site, Texas Parks and Wildlife's Fort Parker State Park, and Huntsville's Sam Houston Memorial Museum.

These types of attractions draw important tourism revenue to communities in the region and across Texas. In fact, a recent economic impact study reveals that nearly \$2.3 billion can be attributed annually to heritage-related activities of visitors in the state.

Learning about these stories ignites our imaginations and gives us an increased sense of Texas pride. That's why it's important for all of us to protect the remarkable history that makes each of us a part of Texas' rich tradition and culture.

Sincerely,

Charles Schwertner
Texas Senate, District 5



HARVEY'S HISTORIC WRATH

Hurricane Damages THC's Fulton Mansion, Impacts Other Historic Sites

By Andy Rhodes, The Medallion Managing Editor

When Hurricane Harvey slammed into the Gulf Coast with 130 mph winds on August 25, the primary concern was protecting Texans' lives. After the storm cleared, efforts shifted to the extensive structural damage along the coast and in dozens of flooded communities.

Among the impacted properties were five of the Texas Historical Commission's state historic sites—particularly the Fulton Mansion State Historic Site in Rockport, where Harvey made landfall. The 140-year-old mansion wasn't toppled, although it received extensive damage to its roof and grounds.

Architects from the THC's Historic Sites Division identified the damaged roof as a priority repair project, and within days of Harvey's landfall, THC staff were onsite to assist with recovery. They removed historical artifacts, worked with contractors to build a temporary roof and board up windows, removed soggy carpets, mitigated plaster damage and mold growth, and removed downed limbs and debris from the site.

"We're hoping we can demonstrate to Rockport and the rest of Texas that the Fulton Mansion can be a beacon for the entire community to rebuild," said Joseph Bell, director of the Historic Sites Division.

In September, volunteers and staff from several other THC sites arrived to assist with the recovery effort alongside residents of Rockport-Fulton. The site will be closed indefinitely.

"The Fulton Mansion has become a symbol of strength and endurance on the coast," said THC Executive Director Mark

Wolfe. "It represents Texas' resilience. We're going to find the money to get it back to full capacity."

Another THC property that received significant damage was Sabine Pass Battleground State Historic Site in Port Arthur. The site was reported to be under a foot of water, and storm-related washout resulted in extensive damage to the seawall.

At Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historic Site in West Columbia (26 miles from the Gulf Coast), the grounds were flooded when the adjacent Varner Creek overflowed its banks, and several support structures received minor damage. Site manager Chris Elliott worked with local officials around the clock for nearly two weeks to help protect the area from catastrophic flooding. His assistance with providing emergency access and his concern for neighbors resulted in strengthened community relations. Elliott's contributions will be recognized, along with those of fellow Site Managers Marsha Hendrix (Fulton Mansion) and Bryan McAuley (San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site), with a special award from THC Chairman John L. Nau, III.

In Brazoria, Levi Jordan Plantation State Historic Site received minor damage—many trees and limbs were knocked down, along with the wooden pumphouse—but the plantation was not severely impacted. Fannin Battleground State Historic Site near Goliad (about 40 miles inland) suffered damage to the grounds, including a large number of downed trees and limbs.

To learn more about assisting with relief efforts and contributing to a recovery fund, visit thcfriends.org



Although it's been a few months since Hurricane Harvey made landfall on the Texas Gulf Coast, recovery efforts are ongoing and will continue into the foreseeable future. For those interested in assisting regional efforts to rebuild communities and help impacted families restore their lives, consider donating to one of the following relief organizations representing just a few of the many worthy philanthropic groups on the Gulf Coast.

COASTAL BEND DISASTER
RECOVERY GROUP
coastalbendcan.org/cbdrgr
361-596-3741

FEEDING TEXAS
feedingtexas.org
512-527-3613

GREATER HOUSTON
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
ghcf.org/hurricanerelief
713-333-2200

TEXAS DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
texasagriculture.gov/STARFund
512-463-9932

For museums and property owners in search of information about repairing and recovering damaged buildings and items, go to thc.texas.gov/disaster-resources.

OFF THE BEATEN PATH



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DOWNTOWN SALADO

Drive Up the Chisholm Trail's Less-Traveled Routes

Mention the Chisholm Trail to many Texans, and they'll conjure up images of Fort Worth's stockyards, San Antonio's saloons, or King Ranch's cattle herds. These sites are deservedly iconic, but they can overshadow other communities along the Lone Star State's dusty trails.

The Texas Historical Commission highlights dozens of these towns in its recently released travel guide and mobile app tour, *The Chisholm Trail: Exploring the Folklore and Legacy*. Coinciding with the Chisholm Trail's 150th anniversary, these resources offer a glimpse into the state's rich cowboy heritage, stretching from the Rio Grande to the Red River. The guide and app are available at texasimetravel.com.

Among the occasionally overlooked areas is the Texas Brazos Trail Region, comprising 18 counties in Central Texas between Austin and Dallas-Fort Worth. Although experts have long debated the locations and names of the routes associated with the Chisholm Trail, the Brazos region contains an extraordinary number of historical references to cattle trails, including the Chisholm, Goodnight-Loving, and Shawnee.

One of the region's most notable trail-related destinations is Salado's **Stagecoach Inn** (stagecoachsalado.com, 254-947-5111), a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark 50 miles north of Austin. The site was recently renovated, returning the nearly 150-year-old structure to a charming restaurant with alluring wood textures, historical detailing, and popular menu items from the 1940s.

The property's origins date to 1852, when it opened as a stagecoach stop on the former location of a Tonkawa

village. The site's proximity to Salado Creek and a natural spring also drew settlers, and the cool water provided a welcome natural respite for travelers and livestock on the trail. By 1861, a hotel occupied the property.



“Salado was a busy place at the time, and the Chisholm Trail played a big role bringing people through here,” says Josh Palmer, general manager of the Stagecoach Inn. “The stagecoaches would stop at the well right in front of the inn—you could get a cold drink, water your horses, and hear about the day's bill of fare from the kitchen.”

The Chisholm Trail also brought new residents to town and helped establish Salado's reputation as a burgeoning cultural center. Salado College was founded in 1860 across the street from the inn.

In 1943, the Stagecoach Inn embarked on a trail to national prominence when new owners Dion and Ruth Van Bibber acquired the property. “Mrs. Van” created and prepared famous dishes—including hush puppies and strawberry kisses—that drew raves and customers from across the country. The Stagecoach thrived before Interstate 35 bypassed Salado in the late 1960s; afterward, it remained a destination, albeit for smaller numbers until this year's restoration.

“We're getting people who remember coming here with their grandparents back in the day—they love ordering the same menu items,” Palmer says. “Things are really picking up in Salado, and we're excited about all the activity here.”

Nine miles up the road is Belton, another significant destination on the Chisholm Trail. The trail is a focal point of the **Bell County Museum** (bellcountymuseum.org, 254-933-5243), located in a handsome Beaux Arts 1904 Carnegie Library building.

Visitors are greeted at the main entrance by a towering 17-foot-tall monument called “Up the Chisholm Trail” by Salado sculptor Troy Kelley. The bronze and plaster monument includes 17 engraved panels, three sculptured longhorns, and is topped by a Texas Lone Star. Historical topics depicted on the panels include the contributions of vaqueros, a prominent cattle crossing at nearby Salado Creek,



DOWNTOWN BELTON

and the story of Williamson County's Harriet Standefer Cluck, who rode up the trail in 1871.

"We're really proud to have the Chisholm Trail monument at our museum," says Katye Ricketts, education coordinator. "This piece of art alone educates so many people about Belton's role in such a significant part of Texas history."

She adds that the museum's chuck wagon exhibit is especially popular with students, who ask about life in Belton at the time of the Chisholm Trail. Ricketts tells them about the challenges of crossing rivers, wrangling stray cattle in thunderstorms, and preparing meals while on the trail.

"The kids are amazed by the idea of mobile meals coming from the chuck wagon—I tell them it was like the first food truck," she says.

While in Belton, heritage travelers can also visit the historic **Bell County Courthouse** (bellcountytexas.com, 254-933-5917), an impressive Renaissance Revival structure dating to 1885. A State Antiquities Landmark, the courthouse was designed by Austin architect Jasper Preston, who worked on early plans for the Texas Capitol.

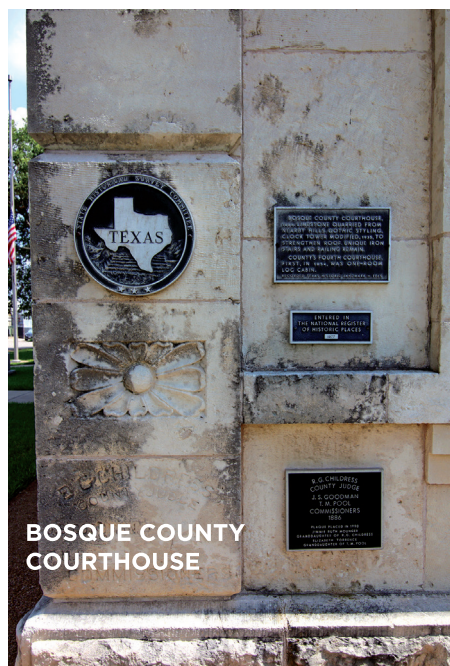
Head 'Em Up

While traversing the Brazos Trail's lesser-known routes, make a point to visit the artistic communities of

Meridian and Clifton in Bosque County. In Meridian, musical history plays a role at the **Bosque County Collection** (bosquehc.org, 254-435-6182), housed in the 1884 Lumpkin Building. Among the Bosque County Historical Commission's publicly accessible files are a portion of the papers and oral histories of musicologist John Lomax, who grew up in the area.

Across the street is the magnificent 1886 **Bosque County Courthouse** (bosquecounty.us, 254-435-2334). The three-story Victorian Gothic Revival building, featuring a picturesque Italianate clock tower and corner turrets, was restored through the THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program (THCPP) in 2007.

During the cattle drive era, a portion of the Chisholm Trail passed near Clifton.



BOSQUE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Its legacy is honored at **Heritage Plaza** with "On the Banks of the Bosque," a sculpture depicting a cowboy on horseback at a watering hole. The **Bosque Museum** (bosquemuseum.org, 254-675-3845) showcases trail-era history with exhibits including pioneer guns and handmade woodcraft.

About an hour's drive north is Cleburne, located in the southern portion of the Texas Lakes Trail Region. Cleburne's **Chisholm Trail Outdoor Museum** (jccchisholmtrail.com, 817-648-4633) is on the original townsite of Wardville, established in 1854 and now commemorated with a THC marker.

Wardville was home to cowboy campsites during the cattle drive era, represented at the museum by blacksmith demonstrations and historic structures. Other noteworthy attractions include the relocated log cabin-style Wardville Courthouse (1854), a stagecoach used in two John Wayne movies, and "the largest art-silhouette cattle drive in the nation."

"We have visitors from all over the state and even some international travelers who are really captivated by the Chisholm Trail's legacy," says the museum's Diane Gilbert.

While in Cleburne, be sure to visit the **Layland Museum** (laylandmuseum.com, 817-645-0940), housed in an impressive 1905 former Carnegie



CHISHOLM TRAIL
OUTDOOR MUSEUM

Library. The museum features eclectic objects collected in the early 1900s by local businessman William Layland, including books and household items from the Chisholm Trail era.

Just down the street, the **Johnson County Courthouse** (johnsoncountyhctx.com, 817-556-6970) anchors Cleburne's historic downtown square. The eye-catching 1913 structure, restored via the THCPP in 2007, is notable for its dynamic Prairie School design, representing a dramatic shift in architectural style from the Victorian approach to contemporary influences like Frank Lloyd Wright.

Stay off the beaten path by heading 70 miles north to Decatur, another Chisholm Trail-related community. The most prominent building in this Texas Main Street city is the 1896 **Wise County Courthouse** (co.wise.tx.us, 276-328-6111), a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This extraordinary Richardsonian Romanesque Revival structure,

designed by famous Texas courthouse architect J. Riely Gordon, prominently features Chisholm Trail plaques at its two main entrances.

Another architectural gem awaits at the **Wise County Heritage Museum** (wisehistory.com, 940-627-5586), housed in the 1893 former administration building for Decatur Baptist College, which bills itself as the world's oldest junior college. The impressive three-



JOHNSON COUNTY
COURTHOUSE



PHOTOGRAPHERS

Capture remarkably restored courthouse interiors in Cleburne and Meridian.



HIKERS LBJ National Grasslands north of Decatur includes a four-mile hiking trail.



HISTORIC LODGING

Cleburne's restored 1924 Liberty Hotel features inviting accommodations downtown.



LOCAL EATS Miller's Smokehouse in downtown Belton offers perfectly prepared barbecue.



For more stories, photographs, and videos, please visit thc.texas.gov/blog.

story structure—now headquarters for the Wise County Historical Commission and Wise County Heritage Society—contains historic photos, regional artifacts, and a notable research library with resources about the Chisholm Trail. About 10 miles east of town on Hwy. 380, a THC marker commemorates the nearby cattle trail crossing at Denton Creek.

Nearly 30 miles southeast in Roanoke is the fetching **Silver Spur Saloon** (roanoketexas.com, 817-491-7942), a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. Built in 1886 and reputedly a cowboy-drawing brothel, the sandstone structure is the community's oldest existing commercial building. Now serving as a visitors center and museum, the former Silver Spur features historic photographs, artifact display cases, and traveler information.

To learn about other Chisholm Trail sites, download free copies of the THC's *The Chisholm Trail, Texas Brazos Trail Region*, and *Texas Lakes Trail Region* travel guides at texasimetravel.com.



DEVELOPING DOWNTOWNTX.ORG

THC Web Program Publicizes Historic Property Listings

By Emily Koller

Texas Historical Commission Planner

What do you do when you're trying to get the word out about available property in your historic downtown? Or if you're looking for business space? Signage, word-of-mouth, local realtors, and ads have traditionally publicized vacancies, but online tools reach a much wider audience. Unfortunately, they don't always cater specifically to a preservation-minded crowd.

With that in mind, the Texas Historical Commission recently helped develop DowntownTX.org, a web-based, user-friendly platform to support the work of historic preservation-minded revitalization programs. Simply described, it's an online building inventory featuring historic property listings for dozens of participating Texas downtowns.

Texas Main Street Program (TMSP) managers and historic preservation officers consistently cite the challenge of vacant and underutilized properties as one of their biggest obstacles to downtown revitalization. The THC's Town Square Initiative (TSI) has worked to create a holistic approach to addressing the difficulty of increasing and influencing the market exposure of downtown properties.

In late 2014, the TSI and TMSP completed a survey of downtown buildings across the state. With a response rate of 92 percent (nearly 80 communities), the results indicated a first-floor vacancy rate of 17 percent and an upper-floor vacancy rate of 74 percent. These statistics helped initiate DowntownTX.org, which changes the way city programs manage and share data; more importantly, it connects interested investors, developers, and entrepreneurs to investment opportunities.

Many websites market commercial real estate, but none focus exclusively on historic commercial real estate. Databases can help downtown programs inventory buildings, and many tools collect and store historic resource survey data; however, DowntownTX.org is the first online tool to combine all three functions.

The site launched for Preservation Month in May 2017 with 12 Imagine the Possibilities tours in TMSP and CLG (Certified Local Government) cities stretching from Harlingen to Texarkana. The tours showcased available downtown properties to engage people who have imagined running a business, owning a building, or living downtown.

"Between the tours and our agency's media efforts, the site generated some really impressive statistics for the launch," says Brad Patterson, director of the THC's Community Heritage Development Division. "We've seen a measurable uptick in inquiries, and actual building sales and leasing contracts are underway that we can attribute to the increased visibility."

The Concept

The concept for DowntownTX.org began to take shape in early 2015. With an initial working project name of the "Downtown Online Inventory," three THC programs—TSI, TMSP, and CLG—collaborated to create a development framework and designate funding. The project received a grant from the Still Water Foundation in the fall of 2015 and used the CLG grant program to support the costs associated with early phases.



Historic downtown Cuero.

“DowntownTX.org is unique in that it features two user interfaces both running from a Google Map-based platform,” Patterson explains. “The public interface largely focuses on showcasing investment opportunities and historic building information in the larger downtown context.”

The site also highlights incentives, provides a direct connection to valid local contacts, and clarifies the local development process. The user-friendly design makes it easy to scan the entire state, and provides distinctive online search capabilities. For example, properties can be filtered by National Register designation to help real estate developers find listings eligible for historic tax incentive programs.

As a complete inventory of a downtown district, the application also highlights historic building information (photos, original name and use, year built, and brief building histories), allowing the public to find valuable data that’s typically non-digitized and difficult to track down. In addition, the software features an administrative dashboard allowing each online community to access a tailored homepage to manage its building and business data. The dashboard stores information beyond what is publicly displayed and offers private functionality to save additional documents, photos, and reports. The dashboard also assists current program managers and serves as a resource that will withstand personnel and political changes. This administrative functionality is proving to be a hit with Main Street managers.

“DowntownTX.org has improved our team’s organizational efforts, tracking abilities, and educational endeavors,” says Michelle Mahfouz, the City of Caldwell’s Main Street manager. “This tool saves time, improves efficiency, and is administratively simple to use. I’m thankful that the THC team developed it to assist our cities as we market our historic downtowns.”

Is It Working?

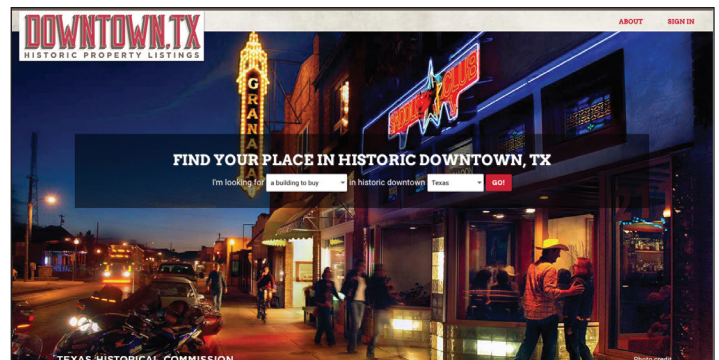
Although it’s too early to provide definitive data on the impact, there is enough anecdotal information and actual changes in the status of buildings to demonstrate early success. In general, cities have reported an increase in inquiries from a more geographically diverse audience. Properties that have sat for years are suddenly seeing interest. For example, the 1932 Post Office in Harlingen, which over the years has been converted into an upscale office building, was shown three times in June after being on the market for years.

One of the best examples of the project’s impact is in Palestine, an original pilot city that hosted 70 people for an Imagine the Possibilities tour in early May. Greg Laudadio of Palestine’s Economic Development Corporation and Main Street program reported multiple property inquiries; within a month, one

building on the tour was under contract and another space had been leased.

The historic preservation officer for the city, Jacob Morris, said the increase in activity from the tour and website launch was not fully anticipated. He was surprised by the number of inquiries from existing property owners—especially those with underutilized and vacant properties—about options for rehabilitation and mixed use.

“The overall level of optimism regarding downtown has increased among people who may have had some reservations, which is a great development,” Morris said, adding that Palestine is already anticipating next year’s tour, which will feature vacant properties and those rehabilitated as a result of this year’s efforts.



The DowntownTX.org website.

The DowntownTX.org software is available to any interested TMSP or CLG community. TSI staff will work with cities to determine the scope of the project and assist in implementation.

“DowntownTX.org will continue to evolve to meet the needs of local programs,” Patterson said, adding that plans are underway to expand programming and develop workshops to help property owners and prospective buyers better understand considerations for rehabilitating historic downtown commercial buildings. “This is just the beginning.”



ARCHEOLOGICAL AWARENESS

THC Program Assists with 'Curatorial Crisis' Of Irreplaceable Artifacts

*By Bradford M. Jones
THC Program Coordinator, CFCP*

"So, what happened to those archeological artifacts?"

It's a question the Texas Historical Commission's Curatorial Facility Certification Program (CFCP) receives from museum staff and interested citizens after an archeology project in their community. The CFCP, part of the THC's Archeology Division (AD), helps protect these artifacts by identifying and recognizing Texas institutions that demonstrate responsible collections management.

According to AD staff, the state's explosive population growth over the past two decades prompted increased development-related archeological surveys and excavations. Combined with the proliferation of media resources, this results in raised awareness of local archeological projects among state and city officials, county historical commissions, museum curators, and members of the public.

Most people don't know what happens to the artifacts after learning about them via articles and photos, or speaking with archeologists at a public or private gathering. Many who call the CFCP assume the items went to a museum, or disappeared into a warehouse like the one in "Raiders of the Lost Ark." While the callers are right, to correct Indiana Jones' maxim, artifacts collected from state lands do not simply belong in a museum, they belong in a certified curatorial facility.

Why certified? Archeological artifacts are non-renewable resources. Once removed from the ground or the water, they run the risk of deterioration, loss, or theft if not properly conserved, documented, and stored in a secure and stable environment. By placing these collections in certified facilities, they are available for future studies and exhibits.

"In the 1990s, Texas archeologists recognized there was a looming curation crisis for state collections," explains Pat Mercado-Allinger, director of the THC's Archeology Division.



Huntsville's Sam Houston Memorial Museum participates in the Curatorial Facility Certification Program.

"We noticed there was occasionally a lack of oversight once the items were transferred for curation, especially when outdated locations didn't offer ideal conditions."

This concern was the genesis of the CFCP. Under the leadership of former THC Commissioner Dr. Eileen Johnson, the agency developed the nation's first certification program for facilities to house archeological collections from state lands and establish an annual reporting process for the collections. This certification process was formally adopted by the THC in 2003; since then, artifacts and records from permitted archeological projects in Texas are required to be housed only in museums and curatorial repositories that have been certified by the agency. To achieve certification, each facility must have the necessary policies, procedures, and infrastructure to safely preserve and make these collections accessible in perpetuity.

In 2005, the Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History became the first facility to apply for and receive CFCP certification. Already the state's designated repository for

maritime artifacts, the museum holds collections derived from two of Texas' most significant wrecks: the 1554 shipwrecks and *La Belle*. The 1554 wreck collections are from three Spanish plate ships that wrecked off the coast of South Padre Island. Their salvage in the 1960s led to the creation of the Texas Antiquities Code to protect archeological resources in state lands and waters. *La Belle*, the last of French explorer La Salle's ships, wrecked in Matagorda Bay in 1686; the hull and nearly 2 million artifacts were excavated by the THC in the 1990s.

With millions of artifacts curated at 16 certified facilities (see sidebar), their role as the physical repositories is critical to the survival of the collections and ensuring their research potential. Similarly essential is their commitment to public engagement. By taking on the responsibility of holding state-associated archeological collections, museum staffers also agree to assist the THC in making items available for research and to promote Texas' archeological heritage by loaning artifacts to eligible institutions for public interpretation. Today, artifacts loaned from certified curatorial facilities are displayed in museums around the state and across the nation. Many of these collections are the basis of student theses and dissertations.

Since its inception, the CFCP has served as an important program for the preservation of Texas' archeological heritage and a unique model for administering such a vast and precious resource. The current 16 facilities are doing an admirable job, but with more than 70,000 (and growing) recorded archeological sites across the state—and over 8,000 archeological permits issued since the adoption of the Antiquities Code—the CFCP is looking to work with existing and new museums interested in pursuing certification.

“Only by working closely with curatorial facilities can we guarantee the long-term survival and availability of our archeological heritage for future research and public interpretation,” Mercado-Allinger says.

For more information about the program, please visit thc.texas.gov/cfcf or call 512-463-6096.



A collection at the Fort Bend County Historical Museum.

Texas boasts 16 certified curatorial facilities across the state. The Texas Archeological Research Lab alone holds over 50 million artifacts dating to the earliest days of archeology in Texas. Together these facilities are an irreplaceable resource for Texas' archeological history.

Five of them are specialized archeological curation facilities:

- Stephen F. Austin State University's Anthropology and Archaeology Lab
- Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's Archeology Laboratory
- Texas State University's Center for Archaeological Studies
- University of Texas at Austin's Texas Archeological Research Laboratory
- University of Texas at San Antonio's Center for Archaeological Research

Most the certified facilities are regional museums that house archeological collections telling local histories or focusing on specific historical topics. Many of these museums are architectural treasures in and of themselves, and all showcase the richness and depth of Texas' history and archeology.

- Brazoria County Historical Museum, Angleton
- Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History, Corpus Christi
- Denton County Courthouse-on-the-Square Museum, Denton
- Fort Bend County Historical Museum, Richmond
- Museum of Texas Tech University, Lubbock



- Museum of the Coastal Bend, Victoria
- Sam Houston Memorial Museum, Huntsville



- University of Texas at El Paso's Centennial Museum and Chihuahuan Desert Gardens

Finally, the THC operates three certified facilities housing collections from the agency's Historic Sites Division.

- Center for Artifact Research, Austin
- National Museum of the Pacific War, Fredericksburg
- Sam Rayburn House Museum, Bonham

Above: Museum of the Coastal Bend; The University of Texas at El Paso's Centennial Museum.

THC Adds Austin's French Legation as 22nd Historic Site

Earlier this year, Gov. Greg Abbott signed into law House Bill 3810 to officially transfer the French Legation in Austin to the Texas Historical Commission.

The French Legation began in 1841 as a private home for French chargé d'affaires to the Republic of Texas, Alphonse Dubois, after France recognized the Republic of Texas as a sovereign nation. Dr. Joseph W. Robertson bought the property in 1848, and he, his wife, and their 11 children and nine enslaved workers lived at the site. The State of Texas later acquired the house, and appointed the Daughters of the Republic of Texas as the property's custodian.

The French Legation is currently closed for restoration. Concurrent to the transfer of the property, the Legislature agreed to allocate emergency deferred maintenance funds to address the most pressing structural problems of the building.

For more information about the THC's historic sites, visit texashistoricsites.com.

Holocaust and Genocide Commission to Honor WWII Vets

On November 9, 2017, the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission (THGC) will commemorate the service of World War II Texas veterans who liberated Nazi concentration, slave labor, death, and POW

camp. The ceremony will be held at the Texas State Capitol on the 79th anniversary of Kristallnacht, the "Night of Broken Glass," which marked a dramatic escalation of anti-Jewish violence under the Nazi regime.

Of the more than 335 liberators identified to date, several living liberators, their families, and the families of those who already passed will be in attendance. This event recognizes Texas liberators, their narratives, and their courage, and it introduces the THGC's Texas Liberator Project, which brings these Texans' experiences to life for a new generation.

For information about this remarkable project or to attend the ceremony, please visit the THGC's website at thgc.texas.gov or email cheyanne.perkins@thgc.texas.gov.

The Sunset Review of the Texas Historical Commission

The mission and performance of the Texas Historical Commission are under review by the Legislature as required under the Texas Sunset Act.

The Act provides that the Sunset Commission, composed of legislators and public members, periodically evaluate a state agency to determine if the agency is still needed and to explore ways to ensure that the agency's funds are well spent. Based on the recommendations of the Sunset Commission, the Texas Legislature ultimately decides whether an agency continues to operate into the future.

The Sunset review involves three steps. First, Sunset Commission staff will evaluate the THC and issue a report in March 2018 recommending solutions to problems found. A month or so later, the Sunset Commission will meet to hear public testimony on the agency and the recommendations of the Sunset staff. Based on public input and the Sunset staff report, the Sunset Commission will adopt recommendations for the full Legislature to consider when it convenes in January 2019. Please refer to the Sunset Commission website or call the office for updated information on specific dates for these meetings.

Through the Sunset review, every Texan has the opportunity to suggest ways in which the mission and operations of the THC can be strengthened. If you would like to share your ideas about the Commission, please send an email to the address below, use the comment form on the Sunset Commission website, or contact Steven Ogle of the Sunset staff. Suggestions are preferred by December 15, 2017, so they can be fully considered by the Commission staff.

Sunset Advisory Commission, P.O. Box 13066, Austin, Texas 78711; phone 512-463-1300; fax: 512-463-0705; email sunset@sunset.texas.gov. Information about the Sunset process, Sunset Commission meetings, and how to receive Sunset Commission email updates is available at www.sunset.texas.gov.

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HIKE INTO HISTORY

Palo Duro Canyon Provides a Pure Panhandle Experience

By Rob Hodges, THC Communications Project Coordinator

While working up a sweat during the scorching descent into Palo Duro Canyon along the steep CCC Trail, it's not hard to imagine Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) crews toiling away in the sun. Evidence of their labor abounds—from the trail itself to stone bridges and culverts along the route. Hikers can almost picture these hardworking men finding inspiration in the sweeping views and taking comfort in the knowledge that future generations would benefit from their efforts.

These individuals ended up in the nation's second-largest canyon (about 120 miles long and 800 feet deep) as a result of New Deal policies during the Great Depression. In 1933, the state purchased land that would become the roughly 28,000-acre Palo Duro Canyon State Park. That same year, President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the CCC jobs program, and several companies comprised of World War I veterans, African Americans, and young men were dispatched to the new park.

They remained until 1937, creating the infrastructure and many buildings that endure today, including the winding eight-mile road from canyon rim to floor, El Coronado Lodge (now the visitors center), cabins, trails, and picnic and camping areas. The Texas Historical Commission honors the CCC with a marker outside the visitors center, and an exhibit inside includes CCC photographs and artifacts. Heritage travelers can experience part of this legacy by renting one of several stone cabins on the canyon rim and floor.

Hiking inside the canyon, on routes such as the popular Lighthouse Trail, provides time for reflection upon its natural beauty and storied past. Humans have lived in the canyon for about 12,000 years, with evidence from several American

Indian tribes including bedrock mortar holes and rock art. First documented in 1542 by the Coronado expedition, the canyon was named Palo Duro (hard wood) for the area's juniper and mesquite trees.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Hispanic traders known as Comancheros came to the canyon to exchange goods with Comanche Indians. Later, the canyon played a role in the Red River War, the series of clashes in the Southern Plains between the U.S. Army and American Indians. On September 28, 1874, the Battle of Palo Duro Canyon was a decisive victory for the Army, driving the Comanches and allied tribes back to the reservation in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma).

In 1877, legendary cattleman Charles Goodnight founded the JA Ranch in the canyon, which he grew to more than 1.3 million acres and over 100,000 head of cattle. Decades of settlement, ranching, agriculture, and oil development ensued in the Panhandle prior to the creation of the state park.

Other historical attractions are in nearby Canyon, a Texas Main Street city. At the center of the beautiful town square is the 1908 Randall County Courthouse, which received an exterior restoration in 2010 as part of the THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program. Housed in an impressive and enormous 1930s Art Deco building, the nearby Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum features many exhibits on regional history, art, geology, paleontology, and other subjects. Outside the city center is a Canyon icon: the 47-foot, seven-ton cowboy statue known as Tex Randall. A THC historical marker notes that this uniquely Texan roadside attraction was built in 1959 to welcome travelers to a curio shop on U.S. 60. It was recently restored for a project led by the Canyon Main Street Program.



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WHERE ON EARTH...IN TEXAS

Know Your Texas History? Put your skills to the test by identifying the pictured site! The first three people who correctly identify the location will receive a prize and be named in the next issue of *The Medallion*. Send your answer to: *The Medallion*, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276 or email to medallion@thc.texas.gov. Limit one prize annually per contestant.

Need a Clue? This building in the Texas Mountain Trail Region is along a stretch of road documented by the THC's Historic Highways Program.



Answer to the photo from the last issue:

The photo at left is a commemorative World War I statue on the Randall County Courthouse grounds in Canyon. Congratulations and prizes go to the first three readers who correctly identified the site: Ocia Jeffries of Comfort, Laura Fincher of Texarkana, and Harold Root of Canyon. Thanks to all who participated!

