



Brownsville Historical Association

1947 - 2022

Banner Newsletter

Brownsville Historical Association

Volume 8, Issue 3

July 2022

A Positive Impact

As we contemplate our legacy at the 75-year milestone we want to express how truly grateful we are to Mr. Stillman for his charitable support and faith in our mission. Over the years, the Brownsville Historical Association has received major gifts from one of our most generous donors, Alexander "Sandy" Stillman. It is because of his support that the BHA is able to continue its mission, bring projects to fruition and undertake various endeavors.

With Mr. Stillman's contributions, we expanded our services and facilities a great deal.

On the third page of this newsletter, you will read about the tremendous growth we experienced from the early 2000s through 2016. A dedicated board of directors and hard-working staff contributed to the accomplishments we have made thus far, although, we would be remiss not to give credit where so much credit is due.

With much gratitude, Sandy, we thank you!



Alexander Stillman



Alexander Stillman and Yolanda Gonzalez working with the Bookeye at Market Square



Alexander Stillman on the porch of the Laureles Ranch House Museum



Annual Paella Cook Off 2017: Alexander Stillman with BHA staff

Grand Opening of the Costumes of the Americas Museum on Sunday, September 11, 2022!

Museum will open to the public beginning Tuesday, September 13
10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday

Free admission every Saturday from September 17 through October 15, other days of the week, regular BHA museum admission prices apply.

Ask about our DAY PASS and visit all of our museums!

Located at 1004 E. Sixth Street, Brownsville, Texas



Welcome! **NEW BHA MEMBERS**

Abigail Pozulp
Natalia Moore
Melissa Saldivar & Kevin Wegner
Joe & Janelle Martinez

Elizabeth Carr
Alondra Larrazolo
Darren Artiaga
John T & Cynthia Bozarth

Sponsorships help make this newsletter possible!

Please call us at 956-372-1515, to inquire about newsletter sponsorship opportunities, or visit our website at www.brownsvillehistory.org for more information.

BROWNSVILLE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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956.541.5560 Fax: 956.435.0028
www.brownsvillehistory.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Historical Happy Hour: Summertime lecture on Civil War history in the RGV

When: Friday, July 15, 2022

Time: 5 - 7 p.m.

Where: Historic Brownsville Museum, 641 E. Madison Street
Cost: Free for BHA members, \$10 when you RSVP, \$15 at the door. Sorry, no refunds. RSVP by calling: (956) 548-1313

BHA at the Lunada Artisan Market

When: Saturday, July 16 & Saturday, August 20, 2022

Time: 6 - 9 p.m.

Where: Linear Park, Brownsville, Texas
Cost: Free and open to the public

Ghost Hunting at the Old Southern Pacific Depot

When: Saturday, August 13, 2022

Time: 8 - 10 p.m.

Where: Historic Brownsville Museum, 641 E. Madison Street
Cost: \$30, RSVP by calling: (956) 548-1313

Cocktails with a Curator: A Sneak Peek of our new museum!

When: Thursday, August 18, 2022

Time: 6 - 8 p.m.

Where: Market Square Event Hall, 625 East 12th Street
Cost: Individual tickets are \$20 for members & \$30 for non-members. Or \$30 per couple with membership and \$40 per couple if non-members. Call (956) 548-1313 for information.

BHA IN THE 21ST CENTURY



Facade of UETA building before renovation in 2002



Heritage Museum after renovation

Brownsville Heritage Museum

In 2000, the Brownsville Historical Association purchased and later deeded to the City of Brownsville, the former United Export Trading Association (UETA) building. Located adjacent to the Stillman House, the new acquisition would serve as the Heritage Museum and in 2009 undergo a reinterpretation with interactive displays.

Market Square/Old City Hall

In 2007, the Brownsville Historical Association signed a lease agreement with the City of Brownsville “for the preservation and maintenance of objects and records of history and heritage of Brownsville...” The first of many rehabilitation projects at Market Square began in 2009 and focused on establishing a safe and centralized location to house archives and future exhibitions. In 2016, a major renovation project known as the Brownsville Market Square Revitalization project began. The \$3.5 million three-phase project was supported and funded by the City of Brownsville and the Brownsville Public Utilities Board and included the preservation and restoration of the historic tower and dome, relocation of electrical distribution systems, landscaping, and created a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly area. Today, the BHA continues its efforts of rehabilitating the interior of Market Square to serve as future archival storage and gallery space.



Above: Market Square before Revitalization Project 2016



Left: Market Square after revitalization project



Old City Cemetery Center 2007 - 2016



New home of the Costumes of the Americas Museum

Old City Cemetery Center

With the help of BHA board members, private donors and the City of Brownsville the center opened in October 2007. Formerly the baggage room for the Old Southern Pacific Depot, the center served as a resource for genealogy research. Permanent displays inside the center told the story of Brownsville’s founding families and the history of the cemetery. Today the building serves as the new Costumes of the Americas Museum.

Alonso Building

Formerly offices for the Gorgas Science Foundation, the Alonso building was purchased by Sandy Stillman and donated to the BHA in 2010. The generous donation provides much-needed income for event rentals and provides a picturesque location for BHA events and meetings.



Installing Historic Plaque on the Alonso building 2011



Historic Alonso Building



Moving the Laureles Ranch House to Brownsville in 2012.



Laureles Ranch House Museum after restoration

Laureles Ranch House Museum

In 2012, the Laureles Ranch House, once belonging to the founder of Brownsville, Charles Stillman, was relocated from Nueces County to Brownsville, Texas. Thanks to contributions from Sandy Stillman the house underwent a major restoration after being moved to Linear Park in 2013; costing an estimated \$250,000.00. The project consisted of repairs to the roof, porch, windows, and foundation. In addition, three structures were added to the property to emulate a ranch house setting; the stables, bathrooms, and kitchen. The house opened as a museum in 2016.

Brownsville Historical Association
1325 E. Washington Street
Brownsville, Texas 78520

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Permit No. 47
Brownsville, TX



BISD
Student Exhibit
for Autism
Awareness

Sip-N-Paint
at the
Laureles Ranch
House

Lecture
and Book
Signing by
CHAPS from
UTRGV

**HISTORICAL
HAPPENINGS**

Historical
Happy Hour:
Let's Play
Lateral!