Entitled, "Photographs & Paragraphs," the CTHM arranged for the exhibit to be leased from the Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio. Three other non-profit organizations, the Cuero Chamber of Commerce & Agriculture, Cuero Heritage Museum and Cuero Cultural & Heritage Foundation, partnered in the effort to bring this unique and educational exhibit to the region.

The exhibit opened with a ribbon cutting at Cuero's former post office, the current home of the Cuero Heritage Museum and Chamber of Commerce. It pairs historic photographs taken in South Texas in the late 19th century by I.N. Hall, with writings by famed author O. Henry, who spent a third of his life in Texas, including La Salle County and Austin.

Hall's scenes and vistas evoke the sound of grasshoppers, the yelp of dogs and the aroma of mesquite amidst the prairie grasses that seem to be hung and dried into each photographic scene.

"America's favorite short story writer," O. Henry is remembered for his surprising twist of plot, especially in urban tales such as "Gift of the Magi" and "The Ransom of Red Chief."

When William Sidney Porter (better known as O. Henry) developed a cough that would not go away (his mother had died of tuberculosis), the family doctor in his native state of North Carolina advised him to leave for the dry, clean air of South Texas. Arriving at the Dull Ranch in La Salle County in 1882 at the age of 20, O. Henry absorbed a sense of place and developed deep insight as to the nature of the people of the "chaparral."

Hall took the photographs used in "Photographs & Paragraphs" between about 1886 and 1906 and O. Henry wrote the accompanying paragraphs between 1894 and 1910. The interesting twist to this unusual exhibit is that the two men never met.
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JEWEL LODGE’S HISTORY: DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Constructed in 1903 by the Knights of Pythias, the structure was designed by James Wahrenberger – a renowned architect of his time. After attending a Philadelphia preparatory school, Wahrenberger studied mathematics in Zurich and in Karlsruhe, he later studied architecture, graduating in 1876. Wahrenberger was the first Texas architect with a professional architectural degree.

The primary purpose for constructing the building was to serve as the ceremonial and recreational space for the Knights of Pythias. Organizations such as the Knights of Pythias often built structures of at least two floors, creating the meeting space on the upper level, leaving the ground level for lease to outside parties; thus, providing income for building purchase and maintenance. Such was the case with the Jewel Lodge No. 103. Records show that the organization awarded the contract for building a new castle hall to George M. Perry for $8,593.00 complete – except plumbing.

GROUND FLOOR TENANTS CHANGE WITH THE TIMES: FROM CABBAGES TO CARS

The ground floor originally served as a distribution warehouse for Moore & Sames, a wholesale and shipping company of cabbage, onions, potatoes and pecans. The front page of the December 1, 1903 Cuero Daily Record reported, “Moore & Sames have about completed moving from the Trautwein building to the lower floor of the new Knights of Pythias building. They will have, as soon as they get straightened out, one of the finest offices and most commodious warehouses in South Texas.”

Once becoming a dealership space for the Nagel Motor Company and Dodge Brothers Motor Vehicles early in the 20th century, the lower floor had a continuous relationship with the automobile industry. A 1930 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows that the building still housed a garage with a 20-car capacity while retaining its original wood flooring and it was also wired for electricity. Henry T. Luddeke opened an automobile supply store on the lower floor, which according to Luddeke also operated as a bus depot prior to his lease. In 1946, the Kaiser Fraser dealership leased the front portion of the building – the cars becoming some of the first automobiles sold in Cuero after World War II.

A December 1957 issue of the Cuero Record reported that at the start of 1958, several businesses would move their location to new sites. Eichholz Oil Company, owned by Lud Eichholz, was housed in the rear of the first floor of the Knights of Pythias building and would be moving to 313 N. Esplanade. “Brown’s Automobile Supply will move to the Knights of Pythias building where the firm will occupy the space formerly used by Eichholz and Henry T. Henneke, who operated a garage. Henneke is retiring to devote full time to ranching interests.” Brown in turn sublet the north side of the first floor to J.D. Dement, who ran an auto repair shop.

THE MUSEUM ACQUIRES THE PROPERTY

On August 6, 1975, the Knights of Pythias organization sold the building to William T. Smith, who established Smith Auto Parts on the ground level, leaving the upstairs meeting space vacant. Mr. Smith sold the building to Richard Gohmert on May 1, 1993, when Gohmert began to operate Rick’s Auto & Farm. The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum purchased the Knights of Pythias building and adjacent Lots 13 & 14 from Rick & Lindy Gohmert on May 29, 2002 for the purpose of housing a Texas heritage, ranching and agricultural museum.

GOOD FOR THE NEXT HUNDRED YEARS

In late 2002, the Museum’s Board of Trustees selected David Hoffman, one of Texas’ most well respected and renowned restoration architects to create a building restoration Master Plan. This plan includes measured drawings, analysis of existing conditions, development philosophy, adaptive use feasibility, plans for a phased development and cost determinations and will become the organization’s road map for restoring Wahrenberger’s architectural treasure. The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum feels that the selection of the former Knights of Pythias, Jewel Lodge, No. 103 will suit its purposes well. ✯

The Texas Historical Commission recently approved an application made by the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum Board of Trustees for a Registered Texas Historical Landmark for the Knights of Pythias Jewel Lodge, No. 103.

HISTORICAL MARKER “APPROVED”
BUILDING RESTORATION
MASTER PLAN COMPLETED

David Hoffman, one of Texas’ most renowned preservation architects, has completed the comprehensive restoration Master Plan for the restoration of the Knights of Pythias, Jewel Lodge, No. 103. Over the past 12 months, a building restoration committee worked with Hoffman to provide Measured Drawings and to create a building Development Philosophy and Adaptive Use Feasibility report. Patrick Sparks, structural engineer with Sparks, Larosche & Associates in Austin was engaged to provide a summary of observations and recommendations for the building’s foundation, masonry walls, roof and wood framing.

An Historical Narrative was prepared on the origin of the Knights of Pythias organization (1864) and a brief history of its existence in Cuero beginning in 1889.

Final components of Hoffman’s Master Plan include ideas for a Phased Development and Cost Determinations. Plans call for an addition to the north side of the building to provide wheelchair accessible restrooms and an elevator to the second floor. Hoffman will make a formal presentation of the restoration Master Plan at the board’s scheduled meeting on Monday, December 15th.

WHO WERE THE KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS?

In the decades leading up to Civil War, a climate of divisiveness and hostility prevailed in the US. A religious man and devoted citizen, Justus Henry Rathbone felt an urgent need for a rekindled brotherly spirit among his fellow countrymen. Thus was founded the Knights of Pythias.

Inspired by the legend of the loyal friendship between Damon and Pythias in ancient Syracuse, Mr. Rathbone, together with several of his like-minded friends, established the fraternal order in 1864 in Washington, D.C. Based on the principles of Friendship, Charity and Benevolence, the organization was the first order ever chartered by an Act of the Congress of the United States, on August 5, 1870.

The order established Lodge No. 1 in Houston on March 22, 1872. The pinnacle of membership in Texas, approximately 30,500, occurred in 1922. In 1889, a small group of Cuero citizens formed the Jewel Lodge, No. 103. This group included John Tyler Wofford, John Stratton, Dr. D.W. Nash, Dr. O.H. Davenport, Louis Keller, Dr. William Rathbone, Otto Buchel, Louis Gohmert and others. Originally, the organization met on the second floor of the Buchel Dry Goods store. In 1903, members constructed the Jewel Lodge, No. 103.

PUTTING THE “FUN” BACK IN “FUNDRAISING” . . .
THE COW PATTY CLASSIC

In 1866 when Thornton Chisholm departed Cardwell Flats north of Cuero with a herd of longhorns, there is little chance he could have imagined the zany cast of characters that would gather on the Steen Ranch in September of 2003 to play a round of “Pasture Golf” in his honor.

The “Cow Patty Classic III” was held September 27 as a fundraising benefit for the CTHM. Over 100 players and guests participated in the unique event which featured 11 golf holes forged out of the brush, cactus and rolling hills of DeWitt County. The golf teams were quite creative in their mode of transportation, and ranged from all players on horseback to horse-drawn wagons. Marshals were on hand to enforce the rules of play — and to field any “bribes” which might be forthcoming.

As an added bonus, the Turner Broadcasting Network was on hand to film the festivities and are planning a spring 2004 feature on the event on the Turner South Network.

The raucous day ended with an award ceremony and a sumptuous chuck wagon dinner prepared by Friar Thomas Ranch Campfire Cookers. A wonderful time was had by all.
2003 MEMBERSHIP

We’d like to extend our appreciation to all those who have come together in such strong support of the Museum this year.—The Board of Directors

$500—POINT MAN
William & Franke Albrecht
David & Diana Burrow
Dr. Gary & Mary Cox
Fred Pottinger
Kay & Ron Walker

$250—SWING RIDER
M/M Clement Alaniz
Margaret M. Allums
Peggy & Travis Basham
Love & Avis Ann Blaine
Jay & Cheryl Branilette
Camilla Copenhaver
Mrs. Lem Duderstadt
Blake & Kathy Dunn
Patrick & Karyn Walker

$100—DRAG RIDER
(BUSINESS)
Billy & Joyce Albrecht
Ted & Frances Aven
S. I Barfield
Bill & Nancy Blackwell
S. A. Burchers
Bill & Terrie Braden
Paul & Cathy Celauro
Sergio Clavarria
Dr. John & Emily Davis
M/M Chip Dence
M/M Pat Dunn
M/M Clete Ernest
Tyrrell Flawn
Lester Edgar Giese
Candy & Dan Glidden
Patsy & Bobby Goebel
Rick & Lindy Gohnert
Russell B. Goins
Dr. & Mrs. J. W. Gossett
M/M Graham Hamilton
Jim & Ann Hedrick
Dr. Jim Herbert
Diana W. Keller
Olen & Carolyn Klump
Bob & Mary McCurdy
Milt & Kathy McLeod
M/M Jimmie McMahon
Rusty Myers
Charles & Jean Nagel
Morgan Dunn O’Connor
Robert Oliver
Tim & Ann Pennell
Cathy & Bud Phillips
Mickey & Gwen Pillow
Sara Post
Dr. James Pridgen
L. Paul Railey
Katherine & Bill Reilly
Ann Rice
Carver & Carol Ann Richards
Jesse Rivera
Jim & Janet Selman
Bubba Steen
Jeff Steen
N. A. Steen
Sue Sulsar
Anne F. Thomas
Missi Thomas
Mario Vasquez
Helen R. Walker
Earl & Darlene Wyatt

$100—CROCKETT CARDWELL STORE
(BUSINESS)
Bacon-Lee & Associates,
Marion Lee
Décor Shoppe (Jean Morrow)

$50—WRANGLER
Joe & Peggy Bear
M/M W. T. Bell
Charles E. Cusack, Jr.
Sarahjane Davidson
Guy L. Dolan
Allen & Linda Duderstadt
Jimbo Garland
Arlen & Sally Goebel
Renvia Lander
Mary Katherine McCurdy
Matthew McCurdy
Donald & Velma Rice
LeOlive Roche
Jesse T. Shults
Cory D. Thamm
James Waid
Phillip & Ruth Weathers
Mrs. Chancey Wofford

$25—BUCKAROO
(INDIVIDUAL)
James & Marilyn Alcott
Rose Artley
Dr. & Mrs. Louis Boenig
James & Margaret Conrad
Terrell W. Dahlman
Tim Ernster
W. C. Foster
Mary Wofford Frazier
M/M Cliff Fromme
M/M Edward Gips
J. W. Grant
Bonnie C. Helten
Linda Henderson
C. B. “Hoppy” Hopkins
Sara Hopkins
Joyce E. Horne
Pat Keele, Jr.
Margie McMullen
Ben E. Praus
Sheila Richards
Camille Smolik
Zenna Snowden

The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum’s mission is to preserve the ranching and western culture of South Central Texas through interpretive exhibits, research, and educational programs.

ChisholmTrailMuseum.org