

# THE CHISHOLM TRAIL HERITAGE MUSEUM

CUERO  
TEXAS

R O U N D U P



FALL  
2003

Photo courtesy Rupert Gresham



Susan Maria Jones Negley at Las Farias Ranch in Maverick County, late 1880's.

## “PHOTOGRAPHS & PARAGRAPHS”

The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum, in its effort to provide museum exhibits and programming to the region even before opening the museum doors, became the sponsoring organization for an exhibit that opened October 9, 2003 in Cuero.

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 education 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.

A reception was held for Dr. Jenny Lind Porter-Scott, a cousin of O. Henry and noted O. Henry scholar living in Austin, who came to Cuero to lecture about the



*“I never was shy about women.  
I never could understand why  
some men who can break a  
mustang before breakfast and  
shave in the dark get all left-  
handed and full of perspiration  
and excuses when they see a  
bolt of calico draped around  
what belongs to it.”*

– O. Henry

author’s life in Texas. Partial funding for Dr. Porter’s lecture and bringing the “Photographs & Paragraphs” exhibit to Cuero was provided by a grant from the Texas Council for the Humanities. Dr. & Mrs. Ivy Ramirez generously opened their historic home for a reception for Dr. Porter before her lecture.

The exhibit, displayed at the Institute of Texan Cultures earlier this year, gives the viewer a personal view of late 19th century life in the “chaparral” of South Texas’ brush country.

The photographs are the work of Canadian Texan I.N. Hall, who moved to Cotulla in 1886. An itinerant artist, Hall worked from his photographer’s wagon throughout the area now outlined by I-35, I-90, and the Rio Grande River.

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. ✧

# HISTORICAL MARKER “APPROVED”



Photo courtesy of Mrs. Anne Friar Thomas

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.

## 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. ✧

# 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. ✧



Jody McCord's Beeville Banditos (left)



Peggy Meyer's Chisholm Trail Social Club (right)

## 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. ✧

## JOHNSON FOUNDATION AWARDS CHALLENGE GRANT

Building ownership has been a high priority for the Museum and by late summer the Board faced a payoff figure of \$50,000. This fall, the Museum sent a proposal to the M.G. & Lillie A. Johnson Foundation requesting a "challenge grant," whereby the foundation challenged the Museum dollar-for-dollar for the remaining amount. The Johnson Foundation notified the CTHM that their board had agreed to fund a grant proposal for the amount of \$25,000. To date, the Museum has raised approximately \$15,000 of the needed \$25,000 and hopes are high that complete building purchase can be achieved by December 31, 2003. ✧

## 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. ✧

## 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  
Lovel & Avis Ann Blain  
Jay & Cheryl Bramlette  
Camilla Copenhagen  
Mrs. Lem Duderstadt  
Blake & Kathy Dunn  
Patrick & Karyn Elder  
Hershal & Trudie Ferguson  
W. R. Finney  
Lester Giese  
M/M David Hoffman  
Tommie C. Howerton  
Gaye Gilster Lee  
Shannon & James Mann  
Al & Dottie Mechler  
Dr. Mike & Tempie McLeod  
Judd & Marcia Miller  
Nathan & Suzy Post  
Glenn & Linda Ruschhaupt  
Bucky & Dee Sager  
Mary Sue & David Sparks  
Sharon Steen & Gary Dunnam  
Jerry & Judy Stevenson  
Clint & Sue Stiles  
Don & Nita Stiles  
Earl & Darlene Wyatt

### \$100— CROCKETT CARDWELL STORE (BUSINESS)

Bacon-Lee & Associates,  
Marion Lee  
Décor Shoppe (Jean Morrow)

### \$100— DRAG RIDER (FAMILY)

Billy & Joyce Albrecht  
Ted & Frances Aven  
S. I Barfield  
Bill & Nancy Blackwell  
S. A. Burchers  
Bill & Terrie Braden  
Paul & Cathy Celauro  
Sergio Clavaraia  
Dr. John & Emily Davis  
M/M Chip Dence  
M/M Pat Dunn  
M/M Clete Ernster  
Tyrrell Flawn  
Lester Edgar Giese  
Candy & Dan Glidden  
Patsy & Bobby Goebel  
Rick & Lindy Gohmert  
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

### \$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 Rogge  
Jessie T. Shults  
Cory D. Thamm  
James Waid  
Phillip & Ruth Weathers  
Mrs. Chancey Wofford

### \$25— BUCKAROO (INDIVIDUAL)

James & Marilyn Alcott  
Rose Bitterly  
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. Home  
Pat Keefe, Jr.  
Margie McMullen  
Ben E. Prause  
Sheila Richards  
Camille Smolik  
Zenna Snowden

## SITE SELECTED FOR FUNDRAISER '04

*David & Diana Burrow have generously offered their home for next year's CTHM gala fundraiser. Scheduled for Saturday, November 13, 2004, the event will be held at the Burrow's home at Hochheim, located halfway between Gonzales and Cuero, overlooking the pristine river bottom of the Guadalupe.*

## NEW EXHIBIT IN 2004

### RODEO PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE 1930S

The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum will open a new exhibit in 2004. The rodeo—that most uniquely American spectacle—began in the late 1800s as an entertaining way of displaying the skill and daring of cowboys.

*This Contest is for Real Hands: Rodeo Photographs of the 1930s*, beginning February 4th, captures the drama and color of an old-time western rodeo, complete with bucking broncos, wild steers, trick riders, calf ropers, and parades down Main Street.

Cuero State Bank has generously offered the use of their bank lobby to display the rodeo photograph exhibit.



**CHISHOLM  
TRAIL  
HERITAGE  
MUSEUM**

BOX 866  
CUERO TX 77954

*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](http://ChisholmTrailMuseum.org)