Museum Secures the World-Class Tinker Collection

After approximately seven years of negotiations, the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum has entered into a loan agreement with the University of Texas at Austin to permanently exhibit the prestigious Horsemen of the Americas–Tinker Collection.

The collection, which consists of approximately 900 objects and artifacts from the United States, Mexico and South America, was given to the University of Texas in the late 1950s by Dr. Edward Larocque Tinker. It includes costumes, personal items, clothing, saddles, bridles, stirrups, spurs, and other ranching and horse-related gear.

Retired Smithsonian historian at the National Museum of American History, Lonn Taylor, recently remarked, “The Edward Larocque Tinker Collection is the most significant collection of cowboy gear in the United States, representing traditions not only of North American cowboys but of the horsemen of Mexico and South America.” He continued, “The fact that the University of Texas has entrusted the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum in Cuero with this collection is an overwhelming vote of confidence for the Museum. The Tinker Collection’s presence will make Cuero and the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum an international center for the study and appreciation of horsemen of the Americas.”

Helping Bring History to Life

The interpretive exhibits of the CTHM will enhance the role of the Texas cowboy in American society, and educate visitors that our regional customs are the newest version of a heritage that dates back to ancient times. The Horsemen of the Americas collection will provide a unique perspective of Mexican and South American ranching customs and will lead museum visitors, children and adults alike, to a greater understanding of ranching and horse-related traditions between the people of the Americas. Exhibiting Horsemen of the Americas at the CTHM is compatible with the Museum’s mission and related values: “along with the history of the Texas cowboy, and the Longhorn, come the time-honored lessons of hard work, individual self-determination, and the pioneer spirit; ideals still meaningful and relevant today.”

About Edward Larocque Tinker

Over the course of Dr. Tinker’s life (1881–1968), he became keenly interested in international relations, particularly between the United States and its neighbors in Central and South America. His visits to Latin America and lectures in Mexico, Uruguay and...
Argentina for over half a century persuaded Tinker that, “the freedom and survival of the New World in the face of growing threats of Russia and China would depend on the trust, friendship and complete cooperation of the peoples of the Americas.”

At the core of the collection’s purpose is the principle that, “friendship, understanding and cooperation among all the people of this Continent are as indispensable to their freedom, future and prosperity as water is to human beings.”

**Cowboy Ambassadors**

Tinker became deeply impressed by the fundamental likeness between the cattle-horsemen of this hemisphere, which included the *gauchito* of Argentina and Uruguay, the *huasos* of Chile, the *chalan* of Peru, the *gauchos* of Brazil, the *llaneros* of Venezuela, the *vaqueros* of Mexico, and the cowboy of the United States and Canada. He amassed this world-class collection with the idea that, “it might, by materializing a striking international similarity, fire the imaginations of the succeeding generations to learn more about their neighbors to the South and thus help destroy the foolish feeling of foreignness known as xenophobia.”

**Bringing the Tinker Collection to Cuero**

The Museum’s agreement with the University of Texas at Austin, signed in December 2009, received the approval of several (both former and current) University presidents, deans, provosts, Office of Development, director of the Texas Natural Science Center and the blessing of the Tinker Foundation in Manhattan. CTHM board members hosted Ms. Renate Rennie, president of the Tinker Foundation, in January 2008 with a small luncheon, a site visit to the Museum’s historic building, and a brief tour of several of Cuero’s historic homes and the DeWitt County Courthouse, which was nearing completion of the county’s $6 million restoration project.

The Museum was also successful earlier this year in securing a $60,000 grant from the Tinker Foundation, located in New York, which will be used for the complete transfer of *Horsemen of the Americas* artifacts, conservation of objects, display lighting, purchase of display cases and artifact mounts.

Literature, photographs, caricatures, and other artwork relating to the *Horsemen of the Americas - Tinker Collection*, will remain at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center on the University of Texas at Austin campus. Clothing, personal items, saddles, spurs, stirrups and other horse-related gear will appear in the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum once the museum is open to the public. Of special note are the turn-of-the-century Mexican *vaquero* saddles, silver mate cups from South America, North American Indian (Navajo) bridle parts, gaucho boleadores, silver-tipped stirrups and a wide selection of spurs, many inlaid with silver filigree. [*]
STATE OF THE MUSEUM:
KEEPING OUR MOMENTUM GOING STRONG

by John Hildebrand, CTHM Board of Directors

Over the last ten years, the Board of Directors of the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum has established a long range plan for a first class heritage museum in Cuero, Texas. The Board is steadily implementing this plan, and the following major milestones have recently been met:

- Completion of the seven-phase restoration master plan, including the construction of a two-story annex and rehabilitation of the former Knights of Pythias Hall, c. 1903.
- Completion of raw space to house museum exhibits, as well as a community meeting facility on the second floor (ready now for visitors).
- Purchase of the Proctor-Green home: This historic home represents the architecture of the same time period celebrated and preserved by the Museum. Additional property behind the Museum has been generously donated to the museum by Lawrence and Linda Anzaldua, providing necessary space for expansion, outdoor exhibits, and additional parking.
- Finalization of the permanent loan agreement with the University of Texas at Austin to display Horsemen of the Americas – Tinker Collection. This collection of over 900 ranch and horse-related artifacts is generally regarded as one of the finest collections of vaquero, llanero, gaucho, and cowboy objects in the world.

Progress on the Museum project is largely dependent upon funding. To date, over two and a half million dollars has been donated and spent on completion of the bricks and mortar phases of the project. Funding comes from individuals, private and government grants, foundations, and regular fundraisers such as our signature “Taste of the Trail” auction.

Funds are sometimes awarded for specific portions of the project, in which case the Board reviews priorities in order to fully utilize the funding opportunity. We have modified the scope and nature of certain phases of the project in order to qualify for a particular grant or donation. As a general operating guideline, the Board has sought to be pragmatic and flexible in terms of project construction priorities and dollar allocation, in order to fully utilize every available funding opportunity.

New Milestones for the Museum: What's Next?

EXHIBIT DESIGN/BUILD

Our next and most important priority is the design and construction of the museum exhibits.

We have developed a museum story, working with noted historians Lonn Taylor and Bruce Shackleford to reflect historical accuracy and to fully tell the story of people who worked the great cattle drives, in the time just after the Civil War and until the turn of the twentieth century.

Based on this rich story line, the Board opened discussions with exhibit designers from around the country. After careful review of qualifications, conceptual design, and estimated costs, the board selected Drew Patterson and Pony Allen Design Studios of Austin, Texas as the design and fabrication contractor for the museum exhibits. Allen’s experience includes work with the Bob Bullock Museum in Austin, among many high profile museums.

The board is now developing a funding plan for exhibits, estimated at approximately $1 million. Although the current economic environment certainly makes fundraising more challenging, we are confident that we can raise the amount needed to complete the exhibit phase of the Museum project. The resulting museum will be one of the finest in the country, accurately reflecting the ranching and cowboy heritage of the South Central Texas Region.

PROCTOR-GREEN HOME

When complete, the restored historic Proctor-Green home will provide additional space for Museum administrative functions. Into the bargain, the Museum will have preserved a valuable example of late Victorian architecture from South Central Texas.

OUTDOOR SPACES

The Museum plans to develop the newly acquired land around the Museum as an amenity, adding outdoor exhibit space and parking. The outdoor green space can also provide an attractive entertaining space, adding flexibility for events planning. Landscaped areas will also help set off the Museum’s handsome exterior. [¶]

Milestones met: the Museum’s Esplanade Street entry, showing the historic building with completed Annex addition. Photo, Marsha Gibson.
Happy Trails: Our Best Fundraiser Yet!

After days of driving rain, the clouds parted over the DeWitt County countryside as if by special-order miracle, as over 650 guests arrived for the Taste of the Trail. Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum board members welcomed guests to the hilltop setting, with views open to the sunset silhouetting the chuck wagons circled around the big tent. A rustic entry gate with vintage cowboy art, created by volunteers Leigh Ann Harryman and Cindy Adams, set the cowboy mood, the perfect opener for a big night of great food, a fast-paced live auction, and entertainment.

Guests were treated to authentic chuck wagon cooking. Cooked up in cast iron pots, grilled on open fires, and served up with a smile by Charles and Jean Nagel and crew and the Thomas Watson chuck wagon team, the victuals offered up the taste of the trail, indeed. Guests grazed the party fare and perused the silent auction items, too: the biggest selection of art, collectibles and unique gifts yet! Kudos to Silent Auction co-chairs Lindy Gohmert and Cindy Holcomb for a very successful auction.

When the dinner bell rang, guests gathered under the big tent for a Texas-inspired meal served up with style by famed caterers Don Strange of San Antonio. Everyone had a chance to get a good look at the auction items set up on the dance floor, and so when the bidding began, competition was brisk. Master auctioneer Joe Adams turned up the charm with his “let’s see the money, honey” banter, rapid-fire delivery and good-natured humor. Always the big highlight of Taste of the Trail evenings, Joe never fails to keep us entertained and makes it fun to outbid your neighbor.

Happy trails, happy feet – after the auction, the People’s Choice Band got the crowd out of their seats and onto the dance floor to scoot the boot to country favorites. Big thanks to A.J. Simpson for handling decor for the event, and to Nancy Blackwell and Suzie Post for festive dance floor decor.

Taste of the Trail V Co-Chairs Lawrence and Linda Anzaldua would like to thank our dedicated volunteers who made the event another major success. Special thanks to chief deputies Robert Oliver and John Hildebrand.

A big thank-you to everyone who bought a ticket, came out to the party and then bid on the items, giving so generously in the spirit of community. We hope you had a great evening at the event, and will come out for the next one – mark your calendars now for April 2012, Taste of the Trail VI!
A big Texas-sized howdy and thank-you to the many volunteers who made the Taste of the Trail V a rip-roarin' success!

Party photos by Marsha Gibson.

Joe Adams, Auctioneer, and Jeff Steen

Sue Sulsar and crew: Gerard Gonzales, Will Carbonara, Candy Glidden and Jeff Hudson

Wayne Wolf, Joyce & Gene Carson

John and Carol Hildebrand

Auction action!

Janie McDougal, Nancy & Bill Blackwell, and Lynn Luster (back to camera)

Carol Hildebrand, Madeline McLeod and mom, Tempi McLeod

Judy & Jerry Stevenson, Rosemary Harrison & Tim Pennell
2010 Taste of the Trail Sponsors

Cattle Baron $10,000
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Petrohawk
Querencia Ranch & Bissell Ranch, Ron & Kay Walker,
Morgan Dunn O’Connor

Jean & Charles Nagel from the Nagel Ranch
Nagel Ranch Chuck Wagon Crew
Kay Kerr Walker and Jeff Steen
Even the horses had a grand ole’ time... Richard and Carly Filip
Cindi Griffin and Robert Oliver
Carol Watson and son Thomas Watson
Chair Linda Anzaldúa and Myrna Hassfield
Keepers of the keys - volunteers from Cuero EMS
Everyone has seen memorial bricks in public spaces – it’s a popular fundraising program for historic restoration projects. The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum has organized a unique variation on that familiar theme. Lewis Fisher, AIA, our restoration architect of record, has designed an elegant display for our commemorative pavers.

Stretching the width of our historic building and new Annex, a pattern of small and large square pavers will make an impressive entry. They will be cut from West Texas Cream quarry stone, a fitting choice for a heritage museum dedicated to the rural and ranching heritage of South Central Texas.

By purchasing a paver, you help the Museum to complete construction needed to make the building ready to receive the public: exhibit furnishings, parking areas, landscaping, and many more key items too numerous to list. Take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to help the Museum, and to recognize your ancestry, your ranch or business name at the same time.

**Going, going, gone!**

Quantity is limited. Call or email the Museum for your paver order form:

- **Small Pavers** (15 x 15") $300
- **Large Pavers** (30 x 30") $1200

Email: cthminfo@yahoo.com
Phone: 361-277-2866

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**Goliad Mission (detail), Finis Collins**

The four watercolorists, Clay McGaughy, Finis Collins, Gordon West, and Lee Ricks painted in DeWitt County this spring, one of our best wildflower seasons in years. The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum will showcase their handsome paintings of Cuero, Goliad and surrounding area.

The show, titled, “Flowers and Flowers,” will open with a reception at the Museum Annex at 6:00 p.m., Thursday, September 30th. Proceeds benefit the CTHM. [☆]
2010 CTHM Membership

$500 POINT MAN
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