



HERITAGE BRAZOS

The Newsletter of the Brazos Heritage Society



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President's Message

This "President's Message," while brief, will be devoted to a couple of important topics related to the operation and deliverables of the Brazos Heritage Society.

Nominating Committee and Service

I am now in the ninth month of my term of office, and the time has passed quickly. In preparing for next year, I have appointed members of the Nominating Committee. The members of this vitally important committee, along with their contact information, are as follows:

Beverly Myers, Chair
Tom McDonald
Sheila Fields
Linda Roberts

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This committee is responsible for developing a slate of officers for next year. Positions available are President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. All Society members are encouraged to give thoughtful consideration to serving in one of these leadership positions. Serving on this organization's Executive Committee can be a rewarding experience. Society members interested in holding elective office should contact Beverly Myers or any other member of the committee.

If you have any questions about serving as an officer, please feel free to contact Beverly Myers at her email address or by calling her at 979-229-9414. Too, feel free to contact any member of the Nominating Committee.

It is my hope the committee will have formulated a slate of nominees by the end of the year for presentation at the Annual Membership Meeting in February 2014.

Liendo Plantation Day Trip

Plan to attend the Society's day trip to the Liendo Plantation Civil

War Reenactment Weekend on Saturday, November 23, 2013. Accompanying this newsletter is a flier about this event.

For additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Events Co-Chair Stephanie Hilliard at 979-777-4924 or via her email at stephanie.hilliard@gmail.com.

Thanksgiving Wishes

You all have my best wishes for a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday.

Dan Beto, President

Astin Clothes to Heard-Craig Center for the Arts

As reported in the August 2013 issue of *Heritage Brazos*, earlier this year the Brazos Heritage Society entered into a long term loan agreement with the Heard-Craig Center for the Arts in McKinney, Texas, to restore, maintain, and exhibit clothing that once belonged to the Astin family. In August 2013 Immediate Past President Nat Hilliard and Treasurer Beverly Myers traveled to McKinney to deliver the clothing to the Heard-Craig Center. That which follows are Nat and Beverly's reports concerning their trip to McKinney.

For two years the Brazos Heritage Society tried, without success, to secure funds to restore the vintage Astin clothes which had been entrusted to us. We set aside a portion of our limited funds and had a select few of the clothes restored.

Some of the clothes were displayed at our "Tea of Thanksgiving" at the Clary House in November of 2011 and then again at our "Antique Sideshow" in April of 2012. We had anticipated having the clothes displayed at the Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History in the fall of 2011, but that did not occur until January of 2013.

During all this process, Beverly Myers, who so graciously kept the clothes in her home in order to have them in a controlled environment until we were able to secure a larger storeroom, made the acquaintance of Barbara Johnson, the Executive Director of the Heard-Craig Center for the Arts in McKinney, Texas. The Heard-Craig Center is a family museum which is housed in the family home. Nina Heard Astin, who was a cousin of Kathryn Heard Craig, spent much of her childhood in and around what is now the Heard-Craig Center. Barbara had expressed her interest in the Astin clothes on more than one occasion.

After Nina Heard Astin passed away, all of her china and crystal and many other items were sent to the Heard-Craig Center, where they are displayed today.

When it became evident that we were not going to be able to acquire the funds to restore the balance of the Astin clothing, and since paying for a larger climate controlled storage room to

accommodate the clothes was costing us more than we could afford, we had to make a decision about what to do with the clothes.

The Executive Committee, at regular session in October 2012, voted and approved a motion for Nat Hilliard to approach Barbara Johnson about a long term loan to the Heard-Craig Center of the Astin clothes. I did so and Barbara was thrilled and excited at the prospect of having the Astin clothes. After due deliberation, an agreement was reached and a contract for a 40 year loan was signed by both parties.

On August 15, 2013, Beverly and I delivered the Astin Clothes to the Heard-Craig Center in McKinney. Up there and back was an eight hour drive; but, it was worth every minute. We left at 7:00AM and got home around that same time in the evening.

Nat Hilliard, Past President

Nat and I spent a wonderful day touring the Heard-Craig Center for the Arts where the Astin clothes will be on permanent loan. Barbara Johnson, the Executive Director, took us on a private guided tour. This was very special to Nat and me after all the research and time we had spent on the Astin clothes.

The home was filled with original family furniture, china, crystal, and numerous personal items. It was as though we had walked back in time, what a fantastic location for the Astin clothes to be displayed and enjoyed by all who tour this glorious home.

There was so much to see and learn about the Heard-Craig family and their dedication to the development and prosperity of McKinney starting in the 1800s, ranging from livestock, retail, agriculture, and the arts.

Kathryn Heard-Craig planned for the establishment of the Heard-Craig Women's Club Trust, the organization which would encourage the education and enlightenment of women and appreciation of the arts. Her home – The Heard-Craig Center for the Arts – has become a meeting place for multiple women's clubs and organizations dedicated to the education and enlightenment of women, which was one of her lifelong dreams.

For those of you who are not familiar with the plight of the Astin clothes, I will take you on their journey for at least the last few years. The clothes were donated to the Brazos Heritage Society several years ago and had been stored in an attic. Nat and I found out about them and they came to reside at my house for a few years while we worked out a plan to restore and display them. I like to think they have now gone home.

Barbara Johnson told us she hopes to have some of the clothes on display for their Center's annual Valentine Day Tea.

I have no doubt that y'all would enjoy a visit to McKinney to take a tour of this grand home

and learn more about the philanthropic families of Kathryn Heard-Craig and her cousin, Nina Heard Astin.

Beverly Myers, Treasurer

The Heard-Craig Center for the Arts is located at 205 West Hunt Street in McKinney, Texas 75069. Additional information about this historical resource may be found by going to www.heardcraig.org.

Christmas Stroll Scheduled for December

Make plans to attend the Historic District's Christmas Stroll on Friday, December 20, 2013, hosted by the Brazos Heritage Society.

Activities begin at 6:00 PM at the Matthew Winsper Knobel Memorial Gazebo in Heritage Park at 600 South Hutchins Street in Bryan with musical selections; this part of the program is free. The park will be decorated for Christmas with sparking white lights and festive red bows.

Beginning at 6:00 PM and continuing until 9:00 PM, several of the homes in the neighborhood, decorated for Christmas, will have their downstairs open to the public. There will be a charge of \$5.00 a person to tour these homes. Some of the historic homes that will not be open will be providing free refreshment on their porches with views of their Christmas decorations through the windows.

As in previous years, the Brazos Heritage Society has contracted with Hidden Oasis to provide horse drawn carriage rides in the neighborhood for persons purchasing home tour tickets.

Come and enjoy some old fashion Christmas activities. Tickets will be available at Heritage Park on the evening of the event.

There will be a special mailing to members of the Brazos Heritage Society about this event as it draws closer.

Additional information about the activities of the Brazos Heritage Society may be found on its electronic newsletter – *Heritage Brazos* – at <http://heritagebrazos.blogspot.com>.