

The Window Pane

Brazoria County Historical Museum

100 East Cedar Street
Angleton TX 77515

BCHM Celebrates Year of the Museum

As 2006 is the Year of the Museum, institutions and organizations across the country are celebrating 100 years of museums in American life. The Brazoria County Historical Museum is joining in the national celebration by extending Museum hours to 7:00 p.m. on May 18th, International Museum Day. In connection with the national resolutions passed by the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, the Brazoria County Commissioners' Court approved a Proclamation declaring May of 2006 as Museum Month in Brazoria County (see below).

The Year of the Museum (YOM) is dedicated to celebrating the rich variety of museums in America, their contributions to civic and cultural life and the unique, personal experiences museums offer visitors each and every day.

"2006 is AAM's centennial year and a time to celebrate America's museums and the enduring value of these institutions to communities,

the nation, and the world," said
Edward H. Able, Jr., President & CEO
of the American Association



of Museums. "During the Year of the Museum, we want to encourage everyone in Brazoria County to experience, cherish, and support museums like the Brazoria County Historical Museum."

The Year of the Museum is a national effort to bring together the collective voice of the museum field to capture the public's attention and imagination. It is a celebration of the wondrous, amazing, and exciting things that museums do to enrich our lives and our communities. To learn more about YOM and view a list of other participating museums, visit the American Association of Museums' website at www.aam-us.org/sp/yom/.



May 2006

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Free Concert on the Lawn

June 24, 5-8 PM

Step Rideau
& the Zydeco
Outlaws

Reserve a plate of Red Beans & Rice with Boudin Balls for \$7 per plate

by calling

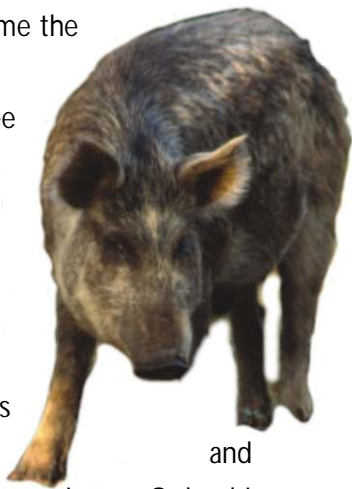
979/864-1208.

Living Remnants of Our Colonial Past

There are many remnants from Austin's Colony scattered across Brazoria County. While old buildings, documents and other artifacts give us an idea of what life was like back then, we sometimes forget to look at the living legacies left by the Colonists.

The feral hogs that root up yards and fields around the county are descendants of the domesticated pigs brought to the Colony beginning in the 1820s. Farmers would notch the ears of their pigs in a distinctive pattern, and then let them run wild foraging in the river bottoms. Once the hogs had fattened up, the farmers would gather them up and process them for the year's supply of meat and lard. The "ones that got away" became the forerunners of hogs that we see today.

Another living legacy is more elusive, but no less significant. The tomato was domesticated and distributed first in pre-Columbian South America. It was there that Spanish explorers encountered the tomato and then carried it throughout their expanding colonies, including Texas.



The Spanish also took the tomato back

to Europe, where it slowly gained popularity. The Europeans created hundreds of different varieties that formed the basis of the tomatoes we eat today.

These early tomatoes, brought here by the Spanish, found fertile soil in Brazoria County.



With good conditions, lots of rain and sunshine, the domesticated tomatoes reverted to a natural state, just like the settlers' hogs. They still can be found growing wild in some areas of the county.

The Museum has collected seeds from these wild tomatoes and is growing a crop of them, which are ripening this month. The variety, known as Matt's Dwarf or Mexican Dwarf, have a strong, flavor despite their tiny size. Come check out our tomatoes on the vine and sample one or two if you would like to.

Bruce R. Taylor -Hille

Museum Staff

Jackie Haynes
Executive Director
director@bchm.org
Joyce McHam
Business Manager
manager@bchm.org
Bruce Taylor -Hille
Program Coordinator
programs@bchm.org
Michael Bailey
Curator
curator@bchm.org
Jamie Murray
Information Services Coordinator
research@bchm.org
Grace Flores
Programs Assistant
bookstore@bchm.org
Rose Olivares
Secretary
office@bchm.org
Bettye Snell
Curatorial/Library Assistant
clerk1@bchm.org

The Museum Staff also can be reached at the following:
100 East Cedar Street
Angleton, TX 77515
979/864-1208 (office)
979/864-1217 (fax)



Thanks to Killum Pest Control for their donated services to the Museum.

Adriance Library & Research Center

One thing just leads to another here in the Museum Library. The recent story about the house in Bonney that was taken apart, numbered, and reassembled in Purcell, Oklahoma, in 1903, has jogged my memory. I began to think of other "house stories" that I have heard over the years.

The first one that came to mind was the story of the Trobough house which also was in Bonney. I am sure I have written about it before, but it is such a good story I am going to tell it again. I am indebted to Marie Beth Jones for her account of the Trobough house story. Her article appeared in the November 4, 1971, issue of the *Angleton Times* and was titled "The House That Chased a Family Clear to Nebraska."

The Trobough family migrated from Nebraska and built their Bonney home in the 1890s. In September 1900, a violent storm escalated until their two-story house was blown off of its blocks with the family huddled inside of it. As Mr. Trobough realized that staying inside the house was perhaps the greatest danger, he decided that the family should take its chances outside in the storm. Fearing the house was about to break apart, the family of four fled the house, but they had not counted on how well Mr. Trobough had constructed it. When they looked back at the house, they were horrified to see that the house was chasing them. The wind was so strong that they could not get out of its path, and the house was gaining on them. As if by some miracle, the house suddenly stopped just in time. It had hit a slight rise in the ground, and the family was able to end their memorable night hunkered down behind the remains of a haystack. The small rise in the flat prairie that surrounded the house turned out to be a bunch of refuse piled up only a few days prior when a barn lot was cleaned out. The timing and placement of that pile did turn out to be something of a miracle. It just happened to be between the family and that house that was chasing them in the midst of that flat prairie.

The story goes that at some point, Mr. Trobough fell to his knees in prayer. His wife shouted over the howling wind that since he had never seen fit to attend church with her before, it was now too late for him to begin praying. His prayers must have helped anyway, because the family survived the night and so did the house, though in a different location than it was before the storm. In 1971, the house was still standing, according to Marie Beth Jones, near old Airline Road at Bonney. I would like to know if it is still there today. The Troboughs took a loss on their house when they sold it shortly after the 1900 Storm. They could not wait to move back to Nebraska.

I love that story of the Trobough house. For as long as I can remember, I have always loved everything about old houses. As a child, I noticed that Angleton had very few two-story houses. I remember asking my father, Jack Giesecke, about that. He was born and raised in Angleton, and has lived here most of his 94 years. His reply was that Angleton had plenty of two-story houses before the 1932 Storm. The Museum's photo collection corroborates his statement.

Many area houses were remodeled as one-stories after the 1932 storm removed the second stories. One of those was my great-grandfather's house, which sat on the lot behind the former Entex office in Angleton. Of all the houses that transitioned from two-story to one-story after the '32 Storm, there was one that was slightly different. The Daugherty house at 517 East Mulberry was more heavily damaged downstairs than it was upstairs. My

father remembered watching with interest as the damaged first floor was torn out from under the second floor. Then the upper story was carefully lowered to street level. Victor Daugherty was a builder who had the skills to attempt this unusual remodeling job. He and his father, Mack (Pat) Daugherty were responsible for building many of Angleton's older homes. Victor, who was born in 1895, once told me that he remembered as a child going with his daddy to the depot when a flat car arrived loaded with columns for the Maxey house on Magnolia Street. The columns had been shipped all the way from Chicago. So there you have a couple of my old house stories.

Cable channel HGTV is considering a trip to Brazoria County, and are looking for old homes to feature on the program "If Walls Could Talk." The producers are especially interested in old houses that have been restored and in which interesting discoveries have been made during the remodeling process. I have submitted two houses for their consideration and am sure that there are others that would be equally good candidates for their program. To suggest a Brazoria County house for the "If Walls Could Talk" program, contact Jamie Murray at the Museum Library. It would be fun to see our county represented on HGTV!

Following is a short verse for old house lovers that I ran across recently in the May 1, 1936, issue of the *Gulf Coast Lumberman Magazine*

Old House

He who loves an old house

Never loves in vain,

How can an old house

Used to sun and rain

To lilac and larkspur,

And an elm above,

Ever fail to answer

The heart that gives it love?

Jamie Murray





Brazoria County
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