

BASTROP COUNTY MUSEUM & VISITOR CENTER NEWSLETTER

Winter 2026

HISTORIC HOMES TOUR 2025

It was a beautiful day to step back into the past and experience history first hand while visiting beautiful, historic homes in downtown Bastrop. We offered five properties for touring, which consisted of four homes and one church. The properties offered a variety of architectural styles and features from various time periods.

For the first time, in partnership with CARTS and the City of Bastrop, we were excited to offer free shuttle rides to participants in the home tour! Thank you to the City and CARTS for their partnership and help in making it a successful day!

An extra special thank you to our homeowners who opened the doors to their beautiful homes and made it all possible. Our homeowners: Peter & Lisa Willitts, Peter & Carol Keith, Thomas Leibowitz & Jodi Smith, and Clara & Michael Cotton. Thank you to First United Methodist Church Board and Congregation for opening their doors to us as well. A special thank you to Russell Bistline and Music Director Brandon Dyal.

We also had a great group of docents and volunteers who helped lead visitors through each home and spoke of the history and architecture. Our deepest gratitude to you for helping make this event a success.

After the tour, many stayed downtown to enjoy other festivities during the Lost Pines Christmas Celebration!

CELEBRATE USA 250 IN BASTROP COUNTY!

Throughout 2026, the Bastrop County Museum & Visitor Center will join communities across the nation in celebrating the 250th birthday of the United States of America.

America began with revolution 250 years ago, and in honor of this milestone anniversary, the Museum & Visitor Center will dedicate each month of 2026 to highlighting the people, events, and places that revolutionized Bastrop County and carried forward the enduring legacy of 1776. Through themed programs, exhibits, and educational content, visitors will be invited to explore how local history connects to the broader American story.



2025 LEADING MEMBERS

Benefactor

Glenda Dayton
First National Bank
Frontier Bank of Texas
Michele Graham & Louis Earle
Kathy Holberg
L.C. Wright Cattle LLC

Member of the Month

Joan and Kent Bohls/9E Cabins
Sherri Gilmore
Sandy Kirby
Sarah and David Johnson
Bridge and Main Realty

Hero

Adjust Chiropractic/Dr. Matt Mix
Charles and Jill Barrow
Joe and Nancy Beal
Lonnie and Judy Enis
Kerry and Steve Fossler
Stella Haecker & Willie Pina
Jane and Rob Hunt
Stephanie Jenkins
Doris and James Kershaw
Gloria and Win Perkins
Amy Schumacher & Tim Wilkins
Lucy Todd and Frank Huffman

Champion

Ed and Gloria Adams
Sanday and Ron Barclay
Alicia Benn & Jewell Broussard
Richard and Sondra Black
Kim and Cindy Casper
Sandra Chipley and Chuck Kellogg
Karen Clardy
John Crawford
Andrew and Barbara Coy
Jeff Crouch & Traci Frary
Les deGraffenreid and Bonnie Bratton
Betty Dunkerley
Laura Fohn
Ishmael Harris
Alex Hebert Family
Michal Hubbard
Jennifer Leisure
Vicky and Robert Lindsey
Mary Lou Loehr
Jamie and Curtis McDonald
Michele Mulholland
Trenton Nall
Lynn Oualline
Libby Sartain
Nan and DeLea Sayers
Tom and Nancy Scott
Carol and Joe Shull
Dick and Duffy Smith
Ginni and Fred Smith
Jodie Smith & Tom Liebowitz
Charlotte and Glenn Synott
Nick Textor
Joe Grady Tuck
Barbara and Alex Vana
Melissa Vadlamudi



RENDEZVOUS . . . SUCCESS!

Rendezvous 2025 was a great success! Over 200 people attended and enjoyed a delicious, catered meal by Jean Lang and music by DJ Clayton Adams. We are grateful to our sponsors and everyone who bid at the Silent Auction for making this event so wonderful.



HOMES TOUR & RENDEZVOUS SPONSORS

Lula Kerr

City of Bastrop First National Bank Frontier Bank of Texas
Roscoe/Cornerstone Bank L.C. Wright Cattle Company LLC

Sam Houston

Bluebonnet Electric Coop
Glenda Dayton
Sara Emmert & Heath Redfearn
Tuck McClinton LLC

Miguel Arciniega

Central Texas Elevator
Sarah and David Johnson
Doris and James Kershaw
Jamie and Curtis McDonald

Stephen F. Austin

Sandy and Ron Barclay
Pat and Robert Cunningham
Les deGraffenreid & Bonnie Bratton
Easton Electric
Sherri Gilmore
Kathy Holberg
Sandy Kirby

Jennifer Leisure
Samuel E Monroe
Osborn Plumbing
Lyn and Tom Phillips
HLS Management, LLC
Libby Sartain

Baron de Bastrop

Barbara and John Allbright
Lisa and Steve Anderson
Jill and Charles Barrow
Nancy and Joe Beal
Sondra and Richard Black
Blue Ribbon Services
Joan & Kent Bohls/9E Ranch Cabins
Caspro Builders
Sandra Chipley & Chuck Kellogg
Geoff Connor
Sharon and Judge Chris Duggan
Judy and Lonnie Enis
Stella Haecker and Willie Pina
William Higgins V

Holly and Richard Howard
Michal Hubbard
Jane and Rob Hunt
Toni and Ken Kesselus
Jean Lang Catering
Bob and Sue Long
Nell Reinap
Suzanne Waugh Sanders
Robbie and Terry Sanders
Connie and Charlie Schroeder
Amy Schumacher and Tim Wilkins
Tom and Nancy Scott
Dick and Duffy Smith
Linda and Frank Wilson

BASTROP COUNTY MUSEUM GIFT STORE

Don't forget the Museum & Visitor Center Store when shopping in our charming downtown!

Whether you're searching for a meaningful gift or a special Bastrop keepsake, our store has something for everyone. Browse a thoughtfully curated selection of children's gifts, locally inspired treasures, historic postcards, and a wide variety of books that bring Bastrop County history to life. Every purchase supports the museum's mission to preserve and promote our shared heritage.

Be sure to stop in and explore. We love helping visitors find the perfect item. Plus, keep an eye out for special merchandise celebrating the upcoming USA 250 commemorations!



JANUARY MEMBER APPROVALS FOR 2026

On January 22, 2026, at 6:30 pm, members can vote on proposed Bastrop Old Town Visitor Center bylaw changes. A copy of the proposed bylaw changes approved by the Board of Directors on May 15, 2025 is enclosed with this mailing. Members can also vote on the trustee and vice president nominations listed below.

On November 20, 2025, the Board of Trustees approved the nomination of **Sara Emmert** as Vice President. Membership will be asked to vote on returning BCHS Trustees **Lee Ann Calaway, Sandra Chipley, Les DeGraffenreid, and Michal Hubbard**.

The Board of Trustees also approved the following nominations to the Board of Trustees for 2026 - 2027.

Cynthia Braendle - Cynthia is currently the accountant for Ascension Catholic Church. She worked for many years at Aqua Water Supply Corporation. Cynthia and her husband, Mike, live in Tahitian Village. Cynthia is a descendant of Bastrop County's lignite mining families and was active in recruiting family member stories for the BCHS Coal Exhibit.

Johnny Crawford - Johnny is retired from the Texas Department of Public Safety. John's grandparents were Swedish immigrants who came to Bastrop in the early 1900's. John Peterson built a number of houses and commercial buildings in Bastrop up until the mid-1940's. Some of those houses are still occupied and have been featured on the annual BCHS Holiday Homes Tour.

Gil Green - Gil is employed with a regional educational consulting service. Previously Gil taught US History for Hayes ISD and geography at BISD. Some will recognize Gil for his reenactment of Texas Ranger John Holland Jenkins who he has portrayed the last several years at the BCHS Fairview Cemetery Tour.

Tina Longoria - Tina is Assistant Vice President and Loan Officer at Classic Bank. She is very active in the Chamber of Commerce and the BISD Educational Foundation. Tina is the mother of two and lives in Bastrop.

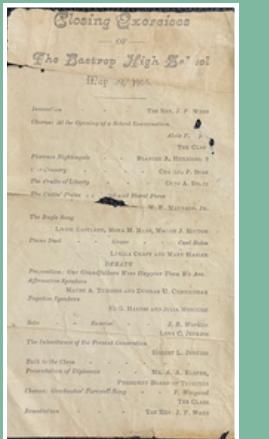
Sheila Lowe - Sheila and her husband, Perry, are long time Bastrop residents. Sheila is currently the executive director of the Bastrop County Long Term Recovery Team. Sheila is a Commissioner of the Bastrop Housing Authority.

BCHS THANKS RETIRING TRUSTEES

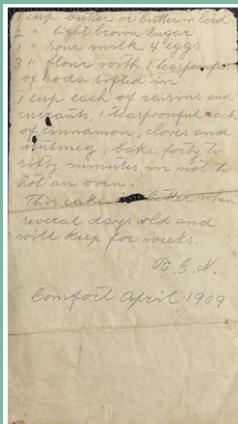
BCHS would like to thank retiring trustees Barbara Clemons, Judy Enis, Sherri Gilmore, and Jane Wright for their service over the past years to the museum and visitor center. They will be missed!

RECENT MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

High School Graduation
Program from 1908



with a recipe on the back
Donated by Ken Kesselus!



Tonkawa arrowpoints donated by
John and Emily McPhaul found in
Tahitian Village



Research Library Volunteers

Jackie Givens	Eric Parmer
Gloria Hoffman	Ron Ramirez
Adela Jones	Juan Rangel
Kathy Kolhoff	Robin Schneider
John Lockwood	Brenda Uptain
Mary Lucas	Brad Weber
Dianne Mills	Allen Ziegenhals
Randy Mikel	

Visitor Center Volunteers

Michelle Adams	Docents:
Dawn Ellis	Terry Beauchamp
Sue Ann Fruge	Judy Enis
Bert Godkin	Frank Huffman
Adela Jones	Leona Jones
Vicki Lackowski	Carrie Martin
Bob Malerk	Mark Mowery
Leslie Mellenbruch	Ron Ramirez
Randy Mikel	Madeline Baird
Cissy Soto	
Orlanda Valka	

Junior Volunteers:

Stephen Ellis Briella Smith

Society Staff

Chelsea Stewart, Executive Director
Barbara Vana, Office Coordinator
Traci Frary, Archivist

Visitor Center Staff

Alyson Ache, Visitor Center Manager
Candice McClendon, Events Coordinator
Rachel Hatch, Marketing & Communications
Coordinator



BCHS Officers

Glenda Dayton, President
Michal Hubbard, Treasurer
Jill Barrow, Secretary

Trustees

LeeAnn Calaway	Michal Hubbard
Sandra Chipley	Jennifer Leisure
Les DeGraffenreid	Johnny Sanders
Sara Emmert	Joe Grady Tuck
Sherri Gilmore	



UPCOMING EVENTS

Revolutionary Wall
All January

Do you know a revolutionary story from Bastrop County's past? Share it with us and the community

Family Make N Take |
Build-a-Bridge
Jan. 10

Learn about the science and history behind bridges and build your own for the new year!

Music in the Museum
| John & Jenn
Jan. 17

Enjoy eclectic americana and alternative rock by local musicians.

Quarterly Meeting
Jan. 22

Meet the new BCHS officers and trustees and preview the year to come for the Bastrop County Historical Society.

First Friday
Feb. 6

Enjoy free, family-friendly activities on our porch while exploring downtown vendors.

Family Make N Take |
I ❤️ Bastrop
Feb. 14

Share the love of Bastrop with a family-friendly scavenger hunt and Bastrop prizes!

Cowboy Poetry
Feb. 21

Celebrate the art and craft of the cowboy poet with venues across the city including the museum!

BE A PART OF BASTROP HISTORY!

Bastrop
MUSEUM & VISITOR CENTER
of the Bastrop County Historical Society

904 Main Street

Bastrop, TX 78602

512-303-0904

www.bastropcountyhistoricalsociety.com

Follow us! [@bastropmuseumvc](https://www.instagram.com/bastropmuseumvc)



Bastrop Old Town Visitor Center

Bylaws

As adopted by the Board of Directors January 20, 2011.

Revised and approved by the Board of Directors July 17, 2025.

Adopted by the BCHS Members on _____

ARTICLE I:

NAME

The name of the organization shall be "The Bastrop Old Town Visitor Center," which may also do business as Bastrop County Historical Society Museum and Visitor Center (hereafter referred to as the Visitor Center.) The Visitor Center was founded under the name "Bastrop Old Town Visitor Center" on June 22, 2006. The Visitor Center received its charter as a non-profit organization by the Secretary of State of Texas on December 18, 2008.

ARTICLE II:

PURPOSE AND MISSION

The purpose of the Visitor Center is to enhance visitors' and residents' appreciation of historical Bastrop, introducing them to local history, directing them to other historical and natural attractions, and supporting special promotional events and historical celebrations.

The mission of the Visitor Center is to promote the heritage tourism of Bastrop and Bastrop County.

ARTICLE III:

POWERS

The Visitor Center is a nonprofit corporation and shall have all of the powers, duties, authorizations and responsibilities as provided in the Texas Business Organizations Code that are applicable to a nonprofit corporation; provided, however, the Visitor Center shall neither have nor exercise any power, nor engage directly or indirectly in any activity, that would invalidate its status as a corporation that is exempt from federal income tax as an organization described in Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Visitor Center shall be organized and shall be operated exclusively for charitable, educational, scientific, and religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the corresponding provision or provisions of any subsequent United States Internal Revenue law or laws (the "Code").

ARTICLE IV

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

Section 1: The principal governing body of the Visitor Center shall be its Board of Directors (hereafter referred to as the Board). The oversight and policy-making responsibilities of the Visitor Center shall be vested in the Board, which shall control the property of the Visitor Center and be responsible for its financial affairs and activities. Among other responsibilities, the Board shall determine the policies governing the operation of the Visitor Center and other facilities in which the Society has an interest or control.

- A. The Board will meet no less frequently than once a quarter.
- B. Meetings of the Board shall be open to all Members of the Bastrop County Historical Society.
- C. Directors shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred while performing duties assigned to them by the Board.
- D. The Board may provide the Directors with Directors and Officers insurance.

Section 2: The Board shall consist of the members of the Board of Trustees of the Bastrop County Historical Society. The election, terms, filling of vacancies, conflicts of interests, governing policies, resignation, and removal of any and all members of the Visitor Center Board of Directors shall be governed by the applicable provisions of the bylaws of Bastrop County Historical Society.

Section 3: The Officers of the Visitor Center shall be the same Officers elected to lead the Board of Trustees of the Bastrop County Historical Society. The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

- A. The President of the Board shall be the principal executive officer of the Visitor Center and the chair of the Board.
- B. Whenever possible, the President of the Board shall preside at the Visitors Center's Board meetings and shall be empowered to call Special Meetings of the Board.
- C. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall preside at the Board meetings. In the absence of both the President and the Vice President, another member of the Executive Committee shall preside at meetings.
- D. The Secretary shall be responsible for the keeping of an accurate record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Board of Directors, shall see that all notices are given in accordance with these Bylaws or as required by law, and in general shall perform all duties customary to the office of Secretary. The Secretary shall ensure that a repository is maintained for all past and present corporate records, except those for which another Officer or agent is responsible. The Secretary will maintain a list of contact information for all current Directors and track the terms of the Directors and Officers.

E. The Treasurer, with the advice of the Finance Committee, shall provide guidance for all Society finances. The Treasurer shall serve as the chair of the Finance Committee.

ARTICLE V:

COMMITTEES

The Board shall be empowered to establish committees to further the purpose and mission of the Visitor Center, as defined in Article II. The committee chairpersons normally will be under the direct supervision of the President. The Executive Director shall be an ex-officio, non-voting, member of all committees, providing knowledge and expertise to the process.

Section 1: The following standing Committees are established by the Visitor Center:

- A. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Visitor Center. The Director who is Immediate Past-President of the Visitor Center shall also be on the Executive Committee when possible. The President shall preside as Chair of the Committee. The Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Visitor Center between Board Meetings and shall make recommendations to the Board. Actions taken by the Executive Committee shall be reported to the Board at the next scheduled Board Meeting.
- B. Audit Committee. The Audit Committee shall consist of at least three Directors. Visitor Center officers and persons who are not Directors may not be members of the Audit Committee. Neither members of the Audit Committee nor any of their immediate family members may be employed by the Visitor Center nor may they directly or indirectly (through family relationships or otherwise) receive compensation from or have significant business dealings with the Visitor Center. The Audit Committee shall be responsible for overseeing the Visitor Center's financial reporting processes, shall monitor the Visitor Center's choice of accounting policies and principles, and shall make recommendations to the Board for the hiring and performance of external financial reviewers and/or auditors. The Audit Committee shall be responsible for meeting with reviewer's or auditor's representatives when it considers it appropriate and investigating and addressing any allegations of inadequacy or impropriety in the Visitor Center's financial controls or reporting.
- C. The Board may establish other standing committees. All Committees are advisory unless these Bylaws or a resolution of the Board of Directors gives a Committee the power to exercise the authority of the Board. The resolution or these Bylaws shall specify the extent of such authority.

ARTICLE VI:

EMPLOYMENT

Section 1: Executive Director. The Executive Director shall be the chief operating officer of the Visitor Center and shall carry out the policies of the Visitor Center as established by the Directors. The Executive Director shall also be responsible for the financial management of the Visitor Center, including managing the budget as approved by the Board. The Executive Director shall have the authority to hire, to assign, and, if necessary to remove any members of the staff of the Visitor Center and shall have the duty to exercise general supervision over their performance and practices.

The Board of Directors is responsible for hiring, evaluating, and, if needed, firing the Executive Director. The Executive Committee is responsible for coordinating the annual evaluation of the Executive Director.

Section 2: The Visitor Center is an equal opportunity employer and shall not discriminate against any applicant for employment or employee on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, or any other unlawful consideration in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal laws. The Society will not employ any person who belongs to an organization that advocates discrimination.

SECTION VII:

MEETINGS

Section 1: The Board of Directors normally shall hold a Business Meeting immediately preceding or following the Bastrop County Historical Society's Board of Trustees meeting at a time designated by the President. The President may change the meeting's date, time, or place should other arrangements become more appropriate for the meeting if all members are notified within three working days of the new event.

Section 2: The President or a simple majority of the Directors shall be empowered to call Special Meetings of the Board. The President shall be required to call a Special Meeting of the board if presented with a written request for such a meeting, signed by a simple majority of the Directors. A vote of the Directors taken at a Special Meeting of the Directors shall be binding on the Visitor Center only if the Directors have received at least 10 days advance notice of the date, time, and place of the Special Meeting, and the notice indicates that a vote of the Directors might be called.

Section 3: Any written notice or other writing required in these Bylaws may be communicated by hand delivery, regular mail, electronic mail, text message, or other digital means. The presence of any Director at a meeting who does not object to the lack of notice is a waiver of notice of the meeting.

Section 4: The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the final source of authority in all questions of parliamentary procedures under which the Director's meeting operate, to the extent that the application of such rules is consistent with the

provisions of the Visitor Center Bylaws.

Section 5: A quorum shall be deemed present at a Board Meeting when a majority of the Directors are in attendance.

Section 6: Any action required or permitted to be taken at a Board Meeting may be taken without a meeting if a sufficient number of Directors as would be necessary to take that action at a meeting sign a written consent that describes the action. Prompt notice of an action taken by less than unanimous written consent shall be given to all Directors who did not consent in writing to the action.

Section 7: Every written consent of the Directors shall bear the date of signature of each person who signs the consent. A facsimile transmission or other copy of a signature shall be treated the same as the original signature and will be regarded as a signed consent to an action, and an email or other electronic transmission consenting or affirming consent to the action proposed shall be treated as a signed consent dated as of the date of such email or other transmission. The record of such a board action taken without a meeting shall be kept with the minutes of the Visitor Center's Board Meetings.

Section 8: Directors may participate in a meeting by electronic conferencing means, so long as Directors participating in such meeting can hear one another. Such participation shall constitute presence at the meeting.

ARTICLE VIII:

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Section 1: The Visitor Center's financial year shall begin on October 1 and end on September 30.

Section 2: The income of the Visitor Center shall be derived from any legal means sanctioned by the Board. All expenditures of the Visitor Center shall be devoted to the purpose and mission of the Visitor Center, as defined in Article II. The Board is responsible for establishing prudent financial practices, filing necessary Federal Income Tax returns, and other matters relating to the financial well-being of the Visitor Center.

Section 3: The Executive Director shall have the authority to approve budgeted expenses for the Society up to \$2,000. Any expense above that amount shall require specific Board approval, except when issued as payments for recurring items, such as payroll, that the Board has approved. The President shall normally serve as the check signing authority for the Society. In the absence of the President, the Vice President and Treasurer shall have check signing authority.

Section 4: The Visitor Center shall have its financial statements reviewed by a certified public accountant, selected by the Board, as deemed necessary by the Board or Audit Committee. An audit or financial review may also be called for at any time by a majority

of the Directors.

Section 5: In no event shall any part of the net income or assets of the Visitor Center inure to the benefit of any private individual(s).

ARTICLE IX:

INDEMNIFICATION

The organization shall, to the full extent permitted by law, indemnify each of its officers and trustees, whether or not in office (and his or her personal representative, administrator and heirs), against all expenses actually and necessarily incurred by him or her, including, but not limited to, judgments, costs and counsel fees in connection with the defense of any litigation, including any civil, criminal, or administrative action, suit or proceeding to which he or she may have been made a part because he or she was or is a trustee or officer of the organization. Such indemnification shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which such person may be entitled by vote of the Board of Directors.

Directors are only indemnified when acting within the scope of their assigned duties. The Visitor Center will indemnify a person only if they have acted in good faith and reasonably believed that their conduct was in the Visitor Center's best interest. In case of a criminal proceeding, the person may be indemnified only if they had no reasonable cause to believe their conduct was unlawful.

ARTICLE X:

AMENDMENTS

The Bylaws of the Visitor Center can be amended by two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors provided that at least ten (10) days' notice of the proposed amendment has been given to the Directors at their addresses on record with the Secretary.

ARTICLE XI:

DISSOLUTION

Dissolution of the Visitor Center requires an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Board of Visitor Center. Upon dissolution, any assets, funds, and property of the Visitor Center shall be distributed to the Bastrop County Historical Society. If Bastrop County Historical Society is no longer in existence; the Board of Directors shall adopt a plan for the distribution of the remaining assets of the Visitor Center to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes and that qualify as charitable organizations described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Code. No Director or Officer of the Visitor Center and no private individual will be entitled to share in the distribution of any assets of the Visitor Center in the event of its dissolution.

ADOPTED ON _____