



PRESERVATION
— AUSTIN —

PRESERVATION — AUSTIN —

SAVING THE GOOD STUFF

Summer 2016 ★ Volume 20 No. 3



Michael Butler & the Butler Brick Legacy

Compiled by Phoebe Allen

Irishman Michael Butler arrived in Austin in 1873 and began manufacturing mud bricks at the foot of East Avenue (now IH-35) on the north bank of the Colorado River. An 1875 flood resulted in his move to the south bank of the Colorado River – between Barton Creek and today’s South First Street and between the river and Barton Springs Road – at brickyards that remained in place until 1958.

Butler bricks were Austin’s building blocks. Most of the brick structures constructed in Austin from 1873 until 1912 used Butler’s “Austin common” buff bricks, manufactured from the alluvial clay deposited by the Colorado River. UT’s Old Main building and the 1888 State Capitol both utilized Butler’s bricks. Butler Brick Company and the subsequent Elgin-Butler Brick Company have distributed high quality bricks all over Texas as well as nationally and internationally.



Butler family in September 1898. From left to right are Mary (aged 44), John F. (aged 19), Thomas J. (aged 14), Mary Margaret (aged 17) and Michael Butler (aged 54).

BEGINNINGS

Michael Butler (1842-1909) was born near Limerick City, Ireland. His father owned farms and was a contractor in the construction of public pikes and roads. In 1866, at the age of 24, Michael sailed to New York City, where he learned the rudiments of his trade as a bricklayer’s helper. Within the next three years he pursued his trade as a mason in Wisconsin, St. Louis, and Little Rock before a move to Dallas in 1869, where he established his first plant for manufacturing bricks using clay from the banks of the Trinity River.

Butler’s Dallas Plant (1869-1873) produced handmade bricks, the clay set in wooden molds using the “soft mud” process. According to Austin architect August Watkins Harris, a lifelong friend of the Butler family who chronicled the Elgin-Butler Brick Company in 1963 for the company’s 90th anniversary:

Here he installed one of the first devices of its kind seen in Texas, patterned upon the implement used in grinding the coffee-bean and bearing the name “Coffee-Mill” machine, used in forcing the softened mud into the moulds. The product was dried out



Clay field at Butler Plant #3, in today’s Zilker Park.

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SAVE THE DATE



Preservation Austin Annual Meeting

Tuesday, August 23 • 6 to 8pm

The North Door • 501 Brushy Street, Austin 78702

FREE to members

All Preservation Austin members are encouraged to attend! We'll discuss, over drinks and light refreshments, what PA has been up to during the last year and vote on our 2016-2017 board. Come see old friends and meet new ones at this fun and casual event. Free for members, \$20 non-member fee will be waived upon joining. **RSVP to programs@preservationsaustin.org by Monday, August 15.** ★

★ PA Receives Grant to Promote Historic Districts

Preservation Austin has been granted a generous gift of \$15,000 to encourage the creation of local historic districts! Historic zoning is the only tool that Austin's neighborhoods have to prevent unnecessary demolitions and determine the scale and extent of future development. We are honored to receive this important funding, which allows us to greatly enhance our ongoing educational and outreach efforts. Workshops, "how-to" materials, and more will be in the works over the coming months. ★

Follow Us on



to stay up to date on the latest preservation issues and events in our community!



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Butler Mansion at 11th & Guadalupe Streets.

★ BUTLER MANSION

Michael Butler married Mary Jane Kelly (1854-1935) in 1878 in St. Patrick's Catholic Church. They lived in a brick house built by Butler in 1877 at 200 South Lamar, near today's Zach Scott Theater. All three of their children were born in this home: John Francis in 1879, Mary Margaret in 1881, and Thomas James in 1885.

On December 20, 1887, the young family moved into a new home on the northwest corner of 11th & Guadalupe Streets. Architect Thomas Harding of Little Rock, a close friend of Michael Butler from his earlier days in Arkansas, designed the house, which utilized both Butler bricks and Marble Falls granite shipped at the same time as that for the State Capitol.

The Butler Mansion featured rooms laid out in geometric shapes, with two octagons and no rectangles or squares. Granite was used for windowsills, window frames, and decorative arches. The home's Gothic influence "is reflected in its turrets – some round, some angular – and in the carved terra cotta gargoyles, which lend a quaint, castle-like charm."

The elegant house was sold in 1966. The new owner leased it as an antique shop. Louis Marks of Houston bought it in 1971 and demolished it for a parking lot. Its Moorish-style arch from the main doorway is now located on the grounds of the Zilker Garden Center with an historic marker. Part of its Victorian wooden porch detail can be seen on the façade of a house at 1112 West 6th Street. Bricks from the interior were used in a house at 6405 Mesa Drive. Bricks, stairway and other details were added to a house at 500 West 13th Street.

Butler, continued from page 1

in the open, the brick being covered with cloth which could be dampened to prevent accelerated shrinkage, as well as providing protection against inclement weather, the finished article being what was known to the trade as "sun-dried brick." He used rectangular, up-draft kilns, starting with two, and soon adding two more, each having a capacity of 200,000 units.¹

The Coffee-Mill machine was operated by a mule pulling a wooden shaft in a circle around the machine, forcing the clay into wooden molds.² Michael's younger brother, Patrick Butler, arrived from Ireland in 1871, purchased the Dallas plant in 1873,³ thus leaving Michael free to found Butler Brick in Austin.

AUSTIN'S BUILDING BLOCKS

Michael Butler established his first Austin brickyard, Plant #1, at the foot of East Avenue (now IH-35) on the north shore of the Colorado River in 1873. His technique for testing clay to see if it would make good brick was to taste it.⁴ The plant utilized the same type of Coffee-Mill machine and processes of manufacturing as in Dallas to produce the sun-dried bricks until 1875, when a flood destroyed the site. "He had several buildings here, including three kilns for drying the brick that could hold about 100,000 each. He also had a machinery house and a barn for the mules that were used to haul the brick wagons."⁵

In 1876, Butler purchased property for his Austin Plant #2 along the south bank of the Colorado River – between the river and Barton Creek Road, and from Barton Creek on the west to the I&GN Railroad right of way (east of Lamar Boulevard) and beyond to South First Street on the east. The clay fields were at today's Butler Golf Park. Brick was delivered by ox cart across the river ford at the foot of Shoal Creek or over a pontoon bridge at the foot of Brazos Street. A ferry was used during periods of high water.

In 1877 a new apparatus, the "Sword Machine" replaced the "Coffee-Mill" machine, improving the quality and quantity of production at the new plant. It could fill eight molds.⁶ In an 1884 article from the *Austin Daily Statesman*, the reporter states:

In the spring of 1875 Mr. Butler purchased thirty-two acres of land on the south side of the river, erected works and commenced the manufacture of bricks, using old style machines. ...today he has the best equipped and most complete works in the state. ...Monday next Mr. Butler will put in operation his mud machine...The total will then reach the enormous number of 36,000 per day, or 11,268,000 per year, counting every working day. ...Mr. Butler employs

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Butler, continued from page 3

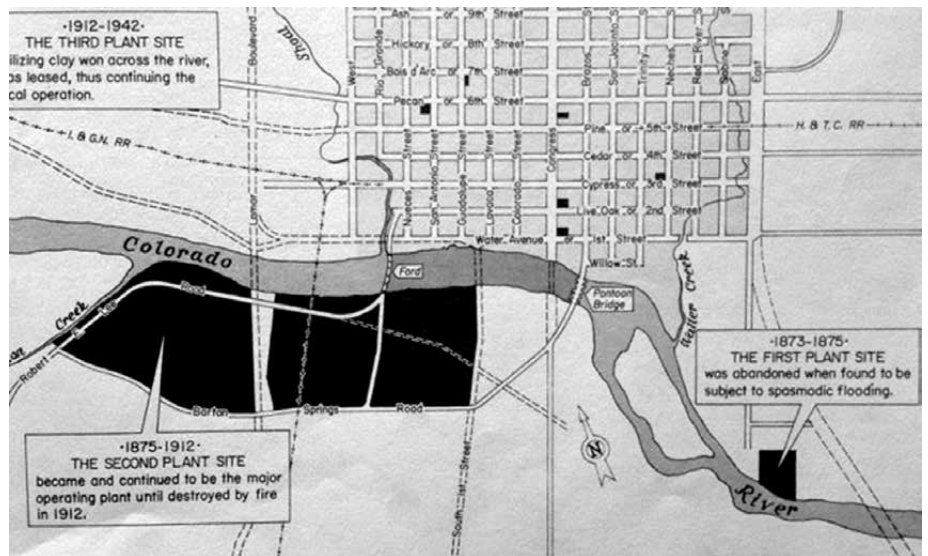
between fifty and seventy-five men in the different branches of his business, has four teams constantly delivering orders, and, in brief, turns out more bricks than any yard in the state.⁷

In 1886, a new and more powerful brickmaking machine was in operation, turning out thousands of brick daily.

Between 1883 and 1899, The University of Texas' Old Main building's Victorian-Gothic wings were completed in three stages, each utilizing Butler bricks. By 1888, the new Capitol was completed, using almost three million Butler bricks in its supporting interior walls. Construction for the Union Passenger Depot of I&GN Railroad at Congress Avenue & Third Street was also begun. In 1892, Butler was listed on the Board of Directors of George Littlefield's new American National Bank. An *Austin Daily Statesman* article from that same year reads:

The yards are located on the south side of the river, just west of the International and Great Northern railroad. As we crossed the bridge and turned to the right on the Barton Springs road, the reporter's attention was called to eighty-six acres fronting on the river. "This, said Mr. Butler, "is a piece of property I bought a few years ago and have since had all the timber cut and hauled off, and you can see by the number of stumps that the growth was very thick. It was impossible to see the city from this road before I had the trees cut down." There are a number of small houses on this land, occupied by the families of most of the men who work in and around the yards, which are located at the west end of this property and occupying ten acres.⁸

In 1895, a patent was issued for Butler's labor-saving device for brickyards. A spur



Map of Butler plants in Austin (The Elgin Butler Brick Company: 1873-1963).

track ran into the brick yard and the molds were placed on a wooden pallet that was sprinkled with sand and then the mud added. The men were paid according to the amount of brick they turned out and were sometimes limited because there was no room to store or dry the bricks. About ten new drying sheds were built, each about 140 feet long and eight feet wide, along with new kilns. New machines were added to make the bricks, which were placed six bricks to a platen and stored under the drying sheds that replaced the older method of covering the brick with canvas and brush. The kilns were powered by wood obtained in the hills up river and floated to the plant, or later by lignite coal from Rockdale and Bastrop. Oil, and later natural gas, gradually replaced the coal.

From 1873 to 1912, Austin's brick buildings were built primarily with Butler brick. These include the Schneider Store, Tipps Building, Hirshfield House, Smoot House, and numerous residential fireplaces. Eighty percent of the early brick buildings at the University of Texas at Austin were of Butler brick, including Garrison Hall and Gregory Gym. About one and a half million of the bricks used in constructing the Old Main building were reused in the 1937 Main Building.

ELGIN-BUTLER BRICK COMPANY

In 1896, Michael Butler sent his son, John Francis Butler, to Ohio State University to study ceramics engineering for three years. When he returned to Austin, John built a lab at the South Austin plant site to analyze the clay and a test-kiln for determining shrinkage, color and refractory characteristics. He also began scouting for desirable clay minerals. While on a visit to appraise and purchase wood, John discovered highly satisfactory clay deposits near Elgin along Sandy Creek. He persuaded his father to buy the land and John Francis moved there to establish Elgin-Butler Brick. A plant was constructed and began operation in 1901. It shipped its first consignment of bricks in 1903.

On October 9, 1903, a charter of the Elgin-Butler Brick and Tile Company was completed between M. Butler, W.H. Rivers, and Leon Keeble (directors), and Thomas Pfeiffer and J.B. Morrison. In 1907, Elgin Pottery Company was formed by Mike Butler, W.G. Sneed and W.H. Rivers for the purpose of manufacturing terra cotta, enameled brick, clay furnaces, flue thimbles, flower pots, fire clay slabs, and floor tile. Located at Butler, Texas, contiguous to the brick plant

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Butler, continued from page 4

and six miles east of Elgin, this Elgin-Butler Plant is still in operation.

According to a 2015 interview with Michael Butler's great grandson, Russ Butler, current vice-president of Elgin-Butler Brick Company:

About this time a kind of industrial type of revolution took place in the brick industry. Brick that were being made by the wood mold process started being made by the Dry Press Method – a process in which they would take the clay and, without putting any water with it, grind it and mechanically press it into shape with a large machine. Firebricks from Butler, Texas were made by this process, and they continue to be made this way today. Just about every residential fireplace firebox you see in the Southwest is made of firebrick from Butler, Texas and if you look, the brick probably have the Butler name stamped on them.⁹

The Dry Press Method was a great advancement, but what really revolutionized the industry was the development of strong Portland Cement Mortars and the ability of the brick makers to make high strength structural clay tile. The tile were so strong when used with the Portland Cement Mortars, walls that were being build three feet thick could be reduced to walls that were, maybe, eight or twelve inches thick and have the same load bearing capacity. The company continues to manufacture structural clay tile, but most of it has a glaze applied to it and is called structural glazed clay tile.

AUSTIN PLANT #3

Michael Butler died at his home in 1909 at the age of 67. He had been in ill health since 1907, at which time he asked his son Tom to take over the Austin plant. Tom ran the Austin plant until 1912, when the estimated value of the plant was about \$80,000.

By 1903, Andrew Zilker had put in a competing brick works, the ABC or Austin Brick Company. Since there was no clay on the north side of the river, Zilker built a tramline with twelve mule-drawn buckets, each with a capacity of a half yard of clay. The tramway, supported by three large masonry towers and a metal tower, delivered the buckets of clay from what later became the great lawns of Zilker Park, east of today's MoPac bridge, to a manufacturing plant on the north side of the river. The tram connected facilities on the south bank of the Colorado River with the brickmaking facility on the top of the bluff behind what is now known as Austin High School.

In 1912, following a fire at Butler Plant #2, Zilker offered the Butler family a lease on his plant. Tom and John Butler, together with brother-in-law Walter Walne, signed a 99-year lease for the 53-acre property and hauled the clay via Zilker's tramlines to this Butler Plant #3 site until 1942. The old boom and hopper – the double-tower supports for the tramline – are still standing on the north side of the river, along the Hike & Bike Trail.

During World War II, the plant manufactured supplies for Armed Forces installations and other industries supporting the war effort.

The Austin brickyards, however, were placed on a standby basis due to war restrictions and price freezes on products. Thus, all brickmaking work was moved to Elgin.

The Austin Plant #2 was used for storage

until its demolition in 1958; it was never reactivated after the war. The brickyards in Plant #2 and Plant #3 were demolished in 1958. The Butlers' first family home on South Lamar, occupied by Michael Butler's nephew John J. Butler for a time, was sold and demolished that same year.¹⁰

ELGIN-BUTLER BRICK COMPANY TODAY

Subsequent to the death of Mrs. Michael Butler, a board of directors for Elgin-Butler Brick was formed among the family members. John Francis Butler, as the eldest, became chairman of the board, and Thomas James Butler, the president of the company.

With the widespread manufacture of concrete blocks beginning in the early 1900s (the first house built entirely with concrete blocks was on Staten Island, New York in 1937), the structural clay tile industry was almost wiped out beginning in the 1950s. Today's Elgin-Butler Brick thrives, however, and the company continues to produce outstanding firebrick and has developed a specialty in structural glazed tiles, which are highly stain resistant and used nationally and internationally in operating rooms, hospitals, meat packing plants, subways and many other structures.

The Elgin-Butler Company has its central operations on a 500-acre site in Butler, five miles east of Elgin, and sales office

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BUTLER PARK

In 1941, ninety-one acres south of the Colorado River were donated to the city of Austin for park and recreational purposes: from Barton Creek to the South First frontage – now Auditorium Shores, Butler Pitch & Putt, Palmer Events & Long Centers, and Butler Park. In 1964, the Butler Civic Center was renamed Butler Park in honor of Michael Butler. Texas Historic Commission Subject Markers will soon recognize Michael Butler and Butler Brick at the park.



24th Annual Historic Homes Tour

What do you get when you combine eight gorgeous homes, 160 dedicated volunteers, and nearly 1,000 attendees pounding the pavement to learn about Austin's postwar history? Another great Historic Homes Tour, of course! "Austin's Postwar Boom," Preservation Austin's 24th Annual Historic Homes Tour, exceeded all our expectations. We surpassed last year's ticket sales by more than 25 percent, extending our educational reach to new audiences. We surpassed last year's fundraising total by more than 30 percent, supporting our advocacy efforts and programming throughout the coming year. From the beautiful houses, to the bike route, to Burnet Road Bingo, this was such a positive event and we're so grateful for our community's response.

Preservation Austin owes this success to our incredible 2016 Homes Tour Committee, headed by Homes Tour Chair and board member Paula Aaronson; they set a high standard for years to come. Many thanks as well to our House Captains, docents, and ticket takers for their professionalism and for pulling everything off without a hitch. Finally, we are endlessly thankful to our wonderful homeowners for opening their homes, sacrificing their time, and for being such amazing partners. ★



Historic Homes Tour participants enjoying the home sites.



Preservation Austin Thanks Our Generous Sponsors for Supporting the 2016 Historic Homes Tour!

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A New Generation of Preservationists Takes on the Red River Cultural District

By Kirsten Ronald, Education Committee

With its iconic music venues and century-old buildings, the Red River Cultural District is a major hub for Austin's live music scene and a central node in the city's cultural history. Yet while venues like Stubb's, Mohawk, and Elysium draw hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, few contemporary Austinites are aware of the history beneath their feet. As rising rents and encroaching development threaten to reshape Red River, that history – and the people and places that shaped it – could soon be gone forever.

Preservation Austin is working to change that. Since January, we've been working with students from the Vandegrift High School FFA to document historic properties along Red River and to interview people associated with the venues. During six workshops, the students learned to do archival property research, take architectural photography, and conduct oral history interviews. They then documented three Red River venues: Mohawk, including an interview with manager Cody Cowan; Emo's, with an interview with former manager Graham Williams; and Stubb's, with an interview with manager Ryan Garrett. Their interviews, photographs, and archival research reveal Red River to be a rich and complex place, replete with ghosts, gambling rings, punk rock, and generations of immigrants and people of color whose businesses benefitted from low rents and a proximity to the capital. In a city where growth often proceeds at the expense of poor or marginalized populations, Red River is an important reminder of the city's diversity and of its residents' entrepreneurial spirit.

Over the summer, we'll be synthesizing the students' work into a new Historic Austin audio tour that will be available for free – like all of our tours – through the Otocast app. We'll also be partnering with local advocacy groups to get the word out. As development moves into the Red River Cultural District, we'll be well-poised to advise on an approach to growth that meets Austin's present needs while preserving the city's past. We're excited to be training a new generation of preservationists, and look forward to sharing their work with you. ★



Mohawk Manager Cody Cowan shows students around the building, which dates to the 1870s.



Archival research at the Austin History Center.



An interview with Transmission Events' Graham Williams, who managed Emo's in its heyday.



Students touring Stubb's with manager Ryan Garrett.

Preservation Activity at the Capitol

Scaffolding is up on the Capitol once again. What's happening?

Article by Texas State Preservation Board

20+ years after the major restoration of the Capitol in the 1990's, the State Preservation Board (SPB) is scaling up its preservation projects beyond the smaller preservation-focused maintenance and repair decisions that the staff makes every day. Elements of the Capitol that were addressed in the early-1990's restoration are aging and requiring more comprehensive preservation attention. The SPB received \$15,000,000 in state appropriations to cover these expenses over the next biennium.

Scaffolding was most recently seen around the dome in 2010, and the House Chamber was closed at the same time to address some projects that were not completed in the major Restoration, namely stripping and re-painting the dome and chamber ceiling. These were largely follow-up projects to the restoration, when these items were deferred for future work.

Historically correct reproduction carpet was replaced in the Senate chamber in 2014, and it received a fresh coat of paint on its walls; this summer, the House chamber gets its turn. (While not a preservation item, replacing the carpet in the 665,000 square foot 1990's era underground Capitol Extension is another large project on the SPB's docket).

The current scaffolding around the Capitol is part of an effort to comprehensively preserve the exterior. The most extensive portion of the project is the repair and painting of all the windows for the first



Image courtesy of the Texas State Preservation Board

Window restoration at the Texas State Capitol, designed by Elijah E. Meyers and completed in 1888.

time since 1995. An anticipated 220 of the Capitol's 1,554 sashes in 777 window openings are being removed for repair in a shop. Metal brackets are being installed to stabilize upper sashes, whose joints have been systematically slipping from the pressures of being braced in place. This stabilization should prevent the need for such comprehensive repairs for another 20 years. Delicate flanges around the perimeter of each sash that have broken from use are being repaired. Additionally, around 75 window sills that have deteriorated beyond repair are being replaced. Old growth white pine is being used in the repair of the sashes, with old growth yellow pine for the frames, to match the existing historic material. Glass of the proper 5/16" thickness was sourced to replace thinner replacement glass that

has been put in place over the years, which puts the sashes back into proper balance, and properly fits the historic construction details. 4.5 miles of perimeter sealant are being removed and replaced to protect the window assemblies from water intrusion.

If you pay a visit to the Capitol this year, you'll notice placards affixed to every single window from the interior. These placards contain the window number, along with a list of conditions the window exhibited during our comprehensive inspections prior to beginning the project. This information is invaluable to our contractors performing the work, as it clearly summarizes the work required. The windows may look similar, but nearly all 777 of them exhibit a unique assortment of conditions. These placards help keep work

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Call for Nominations: 2016 Preservation Merit Awards



Fair Market, Covert Monument at Mount Bonnell, and Yarrington-Chapin House, all 2015 Preservation Merit Award recipients.

It's that time of the year again! Preservation Austin is excited to announce the call for nominations for our 56th Annual Preservation Merit Awards. This awards program honors visionary approaches to preserving our city's unique architectural, cultural, and environmental heritage. By recognizing outstanding individuals, businesses, organizations, and institutions, we hope to inspire others to carry on this important work.

Projects must be located within the City of Austin and completed between January 1, 2014 and the nomination due date of August 15, 2016. Recipients will be honored at our Preservation Merit Awards Celebration luncheon at the Driskill Hotel November 9.

Download the nomination form, due August 15, through our website at preservationaustin.org. Please read the application guidelines carefully since some rules have changed. A \$20

application fee, per nomination, is now required except for those nominations submitted for advocacy efforts.

Preservation Awards honor the preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic properties; outstanding infill which enhances the historic fabric; the preservation of a cultural landscape; and sustainability initiatives which respect a property's historic character. Stewardship Awards honor ongoing efforts to manage and maintain historic resources. Special Recognition Awards honor those who have exhibited leadership in preservation, including through craftsmanship; education; public service through advocacy, neighborhood preservation, or research; or outstanding media coverage of preservation issues.

Questions? Contact Programs Coordinator Lindsey Derrington at programs@preservationaustin.org or 512-474-5198, ext. 7724. ★

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flowing smoothly, and will be removed once the project is complete.

With access available to the full height of the exterior of the building using a combination of scaffolding and lifts, masonry is also being preserved. While the granite façade of the Capitol is as strong as ever, all of the rock-faced façade is being checked for loose stones, and cracks from minor building settling are being assessed and stabilized and will continue to be monitored as part of regular ongoing preservation maintenance.

The entire surface is being cleaned of dust and pigeon guano, and the north façade in particular is being cleaned of black algae and lichen to preserve the stone. While the mortar joints are structurally sound, some small pieces of the building's decorative raised bead, which lines the majority of the joints, have come loose and are being replaced.

Site setup began in mid-December of 2015, and all work will be completed by December of 2016. While minor in scope, the scale of the Capitol requires a significant undertaking for access to the

entire exterior surface of the building, and the work is painstaking in its detail around this original historic fabric. The State Preservation Board is dedicated to maintaining as much original material as possible while ensuring the life and functionality of the iconic Capitol for decades to come.

Next on the slate for 2017/2018 will be a preservation project of similar scale at the 1857 General Land Office at the southeast corner of the grounds, which was last restored in the early 1990's, more than 25 years ago. ★



Education Committee

Ann S. Graham, Chair

The Education Committee continues to be busy as ever, kept so by an eager, energetic and engaged membership. If you'd like to join us, please let us know! There is always room for more!

On May 21, we hosted our second annual "History Hunt" – a neighborhood-based architectural scavenger hunt geared to children K-5th grade – this time in Clarksville, in partnership with the Clarksville Community Development Corporation (CCDC). (The inaugural History Hunt in fall of 2016 was held to great acclaim in Hyde Park.)

Using an "Official Passport," thirty youngsters used helpful architectural terms (i.e. board-and-batten, gabled roof, shingles, column, Cumberland style, etc.) to locate and identify community landmarks, and were rewarded with a host of prizes for their efforts. The goal is to spark children's awareness of the built environment by highlighting unique architectural elements that contribute to a neighborhood's identity and community value.

Very special thanks to Mary Reed, President of the CCDC, for her supportive efforts to make this a great success in Clarksville. Many thanks as well to our generous sponsors, Aubrey Carter Design Office, Element 5 Architecture, Fresh Plus, The Gregory Group, Mathews Elementary, and O'Connell Architecture, as well as the Bullock Texas State History Museum, P. Terry's, Amy's Ice Creams, and Galaxy Café. We look forward to hosting our third "History Hunt" in 2017 in yet another neighborhood.

Our next "Greening Your Vintage Home" workshop on Tuesday, July 12 will feature a topic of great historical interest, Austin's Calcasieu Cottages. Focusing on the redevelopment of four cottages in Travis Heights, we will explore the connection between preservation, green building, and family-compound-living-styles to show an example of how "Greening" goes beyond just sustainability parameters, encompassing both cultural and architectural history and generational living practices. (See page 15 for details).



In addition to special events such as the History Hunt and our "Greening Your Vintage Home" series, Education Committee members are working with staff on posting advanced demolition



Youngsters get ready for the 2016 History Hunt in Clarksville.



First place winners Marcus and Maxwell McWilliams with mom (and PA board member) Andrea. They ran the whole way!

notices to our blog; expanding our self-guided Historic Austin Tours series; and exploring new ideas to develop user-friendly advocacy guides, basic how-to homeowners materials, tool kits and fliers for preservation topics, and much more.

If you would like to join us in this important work, please email Lindsey Derrington, Programs Coordinator at programs@preservationaustin.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann S. Graham,
Chair, Education Committee
Preservation Austin, Board of Directors ★



President's Message

★ Alyson McGee



This will be my final letter as President of the Board of Directors. It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve and aid our organization in its efforts to protect the places that represent our diverse heritage. One of my favorite responsibilities as President has been the opportunity to represent Preservation Austin at a variety of preservation-related events over the past year.

Most recently I participated in the Town Hall meeting of the 2016 Preserve America Youth Summit held at the Texas State Capital in June. Developed by Coloradans Ann Pritzlaff and Michelle Pearson, these gatherings of middle and high school students have been convening across the country since 2007, with more than **1500** kids participating to date. This was the second Summit in Texas, and involved youth from Austin, Denton, Harlingen, Kerville, Wimberly and a number of communities in the Valley. The participants visited the Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ) National Historic Park, LBJ's boyhood home, and the LBJ Library, as well as the Museum of the Pacific War in Fredricksburg. The goal of these Summits is to get kids out of the classroom and into the field to learn about history, archeology, heritage tourism and preservation. They always conclude with the young people meeting with preservation leaders to discuss their observations, what they learned, and provide insight on how historic sites and museums can better attract and engage younger audiences. Many of the students expressed how meaningful it was for them to learn about

LBJ and Lady Bird by visiting the places that were part of their history, and how important experiential learning is to them. This is the key to why protecting historic buildings and sites is so important to our communities – why only an authentic experience, at a real site, can provide visitors with that unique and engaging “sense of place.”

I was proud to be able to share with the students the many ways that Preservation Austin provides experiential opportunities for young people to learn about our community's diverse heritage. During the past spring our staff and volunteers worked with students from Vandegrift High School to collect oral histories and create an audio tour of historic properties within the Red River Cultural District along Red River Street between 6th and 10th Streets. The project will help inform the public and policymakers about the importance of the Red River Cultural District.

We also held our 2nd Annual History Hunt for children and their families. This year's hunt was presented in partnership with Clarksville Community Development Corporation (CCDC) and taught kids about the unique African American heritage of the Clarksville neighborhood. It also gave Preservation Austin an opportunity to work with the CCDC, an organization that for 40 years has been preserving Clarksville's history and traditional sense of community, and keeping Clarksville ethnically and economically diverse by providing affordable housing. CCDC has been an important partner and

we appreciated getting to help them teach younger Austinites about the neighborhood they work so hard to protect.

However, getting young people involved in historic preservation activities isn't just a local issue. As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act there are a number of ways preservation organizations are working to reach out to younger audiences across the country. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the independent federal agency that advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy, adopted its Engaging Youth Strategic Plan in March of this year. The goal is to find ways to interest and inform youth about historic preservation at the local and national level, and expand their awareness of the positive impact preservation has on their communities. Additionally, the National Trust for Historic Preservation launched a new initiative, named “HOPE Crew” to train young people in preservation crafts while at the same time helping preserve historic sites on public lands. The program, which stands for “Hands-On Preservation Experience,” links preservation projects with the national youth corps movement – a series of programs throughout the country that allow young people to gain valuable work

Continued on page 13



Inherit Austin

Michelle Slattery, Chair of Inherit Austin

Inherit Austin is a membership level of Preservation Austin. We cultivate a new generation of PA members by hosting social, cultural & educational events to raise awareness and introduce people to uniquely Austin locations. IA is committed to the same mission as Preservation Austin and offers activities that appeal to singles, couples & families.

Inherit Austin recently partnered with Blue Starlite Mini Urban Drive-In and the Texas Archive of the Moving Image for a **Historic Night at the Starlite!** The Blue Starlite Mini Urban Drive-In was named one of the world's coolest drive-ins by Conde Nast magazine. We kicked off the evening with excerpts from TAMI's old Austin movie collection. The program included a presentation by Katharine Austin with TAMI and concluded with a screening of the 1971 classic *The Last Picture Show*, depicting life in a rural Texas town in the 1950s. The company was fabulous and the weather could not have been better! If you have never been to Blue Starlite, I would highly recommend you check them out!



IA board members Tori Haltom, Katie Bullard, Matt Welch, Michelle Slattery, Mike Smith, and Caroline Wright, with TAMI's Katharine Austin (second from left).

We are excited about the 7th Annual **Somewhere In Time** this fall - more details will be announced soon.

Please consider upgrading or renewing your membership at the Inherit Austin Membership Level to receive special invitations and discounts to our unique events. ★

**THANK YOU
TO OUR PRESERVATION AUSTIN
BUSINESS AMBASSADORS!**

Clayton Bullock, Moreland Properties
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Norwood Tower, LP

O'Connell Architecture
Tiffany Peters, Moreland Properties



Preservation Austin thanks the **Heritage Title Company** and **Driskill Hotel** for their dedicated support of our Preservation Merit Awards Program and for underwriting our 2015 awards luncheon.



Butler, continued from page 5

in Austin. The family business, owned and operated by four generations of Butlers, was sold in 2005. Butler family members continue to serve in various positions. ★

SOURCES

¹ August Watkins Harris, *The Elgin Butler Brick Company: 1873-1963* (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones Co., 1963), 8, 10.

² Tom Stutzenburg, "The Elgin-Butler Brick Company: A Term Paper for Texas History," April 23, 1954. Sources included John, Mike, and Thomas J. Butler.

³ Stutzenburg, 1. A short time later, Patrick went blind and the Dallas plant was closed.

⁴ Stutzenburg, 1.

⁵ Stutzenburg, 2.

⁶ Harris, 11.

⁷ *Austin Daily Statesman*, "Bricks. Their Wholesale Manufacture in Austin. A Reporter's Visit to the Extensive Yards of Mr. M. Butler, and What He Saw," 1884.


⁸ *Austin American-Statesman*, May 24, 1964, D10.

⁹ Oral History Interview with Russell Butler, Meta Butler Hunt, and Helen Butler Young by Charlie Betts, May 6, 2015. Recorded and transcribed by Ann Dolce. Austin History Center, Austin Public Library. Edited by Russ Butler.


¹⁰ By 1920, a farmer, Samuel Hill, is indicated in the *City Directory* as a resident at 200 S. Lamar.

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President's Message, continued from page 11

experience and further their education through "real world," project-based work.


Our young people will be the leaders of our non-profits, businesses, and government entities – someday making the decisions that determine our community's future.

Providing preservation-based experiential learning can teach youth about the benefits of civic involvement and instill community pride. I'm proud that Preservation Austin is helping our young people understand the importance of our heritage and historic places, and that we

are doing that in fun, experiential ways that engage and enlighten them. If you have a young person in your life, I hope you will encourage them to participate in one of the many preservation-based programs that Preservation Austin and other organizations have to offer.

LINKS ★

Preserve America Youth Summit - <http://www.preservationyouthsummit.org/>
Clarksville Community Development Corp. - <http://www.clarkvillecdc.org/>
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation - <http://www.achp.gov/youth.html>
National Trust for Historic Preservation "HOPE Crew" - <https://savingplaces.org/hope-crew#.V2gPTPkrK00>

Sincerely,

Alyson McGee
★



PRESERVATION
— AUSTIN —



HERITAGE QUIZ

Rebekah Dobrasko

Preservation Austin presents our Facebook Heritage Quiz the first Friday of every month. The first respondent to correctly identify a local landmark receives a \$5 gift card to Cenote courtesy of your favorite preservation organization, so keep a lookout for upcoming quizzes this summer and fall!

Congratulations to our recent winners for correctly spotting the following properties:

April 2016 – Municipal Building, 124 West 8th Street

Austin's first City Hall was the old state capitol, given to Austin in 1856 and opened for City Hall in 1858. The Municipal Building is the fourth City Hall, built on the same location as the original, and replaced by Austin's current 2004 City Hall located on Cesar Chavez Street. The City of Austin received a Public Works Administration grant in 1937 for the construction of a new city hall and a central fire station. Architectural firm Page and Southerland designed the building as a renovation and expansion around the 1906 City Hall, giving the expansion a distinct Art Moderne style. The cornerstone for the 1906 building can be seen next to the 1938 cornerstone. The four-story structure, with a courtyard to the east, held City Council, Water and Light, Engineering, Purchasing, and Legal departments when it opened. Austin's Municipal Building still serves the City today.

★ **Winner: Bonnie Tipton Wilson**



Municipal Building

May 2016 – John Hancock House, 1306 Colorado Street

This tiny house in the shadow of the Texas Capitol was built for John Hancock in 1854. It is one of the oldest remaining houses in Austin and an example of the mid-19th century vernacular architecture which once surrounded the capitol. John Hancock moved to Austin in 1847 as a lawyer and a planter. Originally from Alabama, Hancock decided to practice law in Texas and developed a large business in Austin. He contracted Austin's prolific master builder Abner Cook to design his residence. The masonry and stucco house is one story with a double door entrance. In 1940, a rear addition was added, and the building maintains its appearance and character, although its setting has been vastly altered by parking garages and the expansion of the capitol grounds. John Hancock's house is also a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark and is currently owned by the Texas Historical Commission.

★ **Winner: Joseph Janczak**



John Hancock House

June 2016 – Westhill, 1703 West Avenue

Westhill is one of the earliest residences (c. 1855) built in what is now known as Judges Hill. Designed by Abner Cook, the house sits on a steep slope, and the architecture of the home reflects the topography of the land. The main, two-story entrance with its large porch and full columns actually faces away from the street and is no longer visible from the public right-of-way. The street façade is the rear façade of the residence. The original carriage house is used as an office. Multiple judges and attorneys occupied Westhill over the years, as well as the surrounding buildings, thus giving the name of the neighborhood "Judges Hill." Westhill is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark.

★ **Winner: Charles Peveto**



Westhill



★ Our New & Renewing Members

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Emily Payne
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Shirley & Leslie Smith
John & Nicole Williams
Anthony & Summer Yen

Inherit Austin Individual ★
Virginia Boswell
Danielle Groux
Carolyn McFarland
Elizabeth Porterfield
Julie Yarbrough ★

SAVE THE DATE

Greening Your Vintage Home, Calcasieu-Style



Tuesday, July 12
6-8pm
1924 Newning Avenue
\$25 Members, \$30 Non-Members
Light Refreshments Provided

This summer's Greening Your Vintage Home workshop will feature the enduring legacy of the Calcasieu Cottages, Austin's original tiny houses. Founded in 1883, the Calcasieu Lumber Company provided home-building and outfitting services throughout the 20th century. The firm built picturesque, three-room "Normandy cottages" to house Austin's working-class families in the 1930's, roughly thirty of which remain. These include a stunning cluster of four 1936 cottages in Travis Heights under renovation by Murray Legge Architecture and Pilgrim Building Company.

Join us to explore the past, present, and future of these beloved buildings! Stephanie Phillips, Project Design Assistant at the Texas State Preservation Board, will present on Calcasieu's history, followed by a discussion with Murray Legge, FAIA and Branson Fustes, President of Pilgrim Building Company. The group will cap off the evening with a short walk

to the construction site for a guided tour. We'll discuss the connection between preservation, sustainable building, and multi-generational housing to examine the many ways in which to be "green."



Seating is limited! Visit www.preservationaustin.org for tickets. ★

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PA CALENDAR OF EVENTS • 2016

JUL
12

Austin Greening Your Vintage Home, Calcasieu Style

1924 Newning Avenue, 78704, 6pm-8pm. Join us to explore the enduring legacy of Calcasieu Cottages, Austin's original tiny houses! See page 15 for details. \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members.

AUG
23

Annual Meeting

The North Door (501 Brushy Street, 78702), 6pm-8pm. All members are encouraged to attend! We'll discuss, over drinks and light refreshments, what PA has been up to during the last year and vote on our 2016-2017 board. Free for members. See page 2 for details.

SEP
TBA

Somewhere In Time

Keep an eye out for details about Inherit Austin's 7th Annual Somewhere In Time fundraiser this fall! Location TBA.

NOV
9

PRESERVATION MERIT AWARDS CELEBRATION

Driskill Hotel (604 Brazos Street); check-in begins 11am, luncheon from 11:30-1:30pm. Our 56th Annual Preservation Merit Awards Celebration honors visionary approaches to preserving our city's heritage. Featured speaker TBA!

★ Visit www.preservationaustin.org for details and tickets today!