

# BHA Banner Newsletter

Brownsville Historical Association

Volume 7, Issue 4

October 2021

## Brownsville's Haunted History

“Have you ever seen a ghost?”

We get asked this question a lot at the Brownsville Historical Association. It's a reasonable question when you consider that all of the properties we operate are historic sites, which can also translate into “spooky sites” for ghost hunters. Some BHA staff members and volunteers have their suspicions when it comes to the supernatural, but almost each one of us can say that on occasion, we have heard noises, witnessed the unexplained closing of creaky doors, and heard the sound of footsteps at our museums (usually after hours) that we cannot explain.

host our “Shades of Haunted History Walking Tours”. These tours take you to various historic sites in downtown Brownsville and reveal our storied past. Many attendees have walked away from these tours with a newfound knowledge of Brownsville history as well as a new ghost story to share with family and friends.

At the end of the October, the BHA staff hosts the “Murder, Mystery, Mayhem Tour” of the Old City Cemetery. Each grave side on the tour is specially chosen as it is based on historical data and a real person that once lived in Brownsville (or died in Brownsville.) This tour has the characters who were victims of a scandalous



*Market Square Building*



*Old City Cemetery*

Regardless of what we think we've seen or heard, a recent national poll found that one in five Americans believes in ghosts and supernatural activity. Maybe it's a way for us to attempt to explain the afterlife? Or great Hollywood movies have piqued our interest in the unknown? We do know that many local ghost stories have been passed down from generation to generation and many times these oral histories are rooted in fact.

The Brownsville Historical Association is delighted to have collaborated with local historians over the years to gather these ghost stories and oral histories and share them with our members and visitors. This year, like every year in more than a decade, we

death or murder come to life! Actors memorize lines from a script drafted from historical research. These tours are an interesting way to stimulate interest in our local history and learn more about the people buried in our historic cemetery.

As BHA members, we hope that you join us for a tour this October. Please see tour information in this newsletter to make a reservation. Take a stroll with us and learn more about Brownsville's ghostly happenings. Whether you believe in ghosts or not, we think our tours will certainly mystify and entertain you this fall.

# HALLOWEEN

## EVENTS



### Shades of Haunted History Tour: Downtown Brownsville

**When:** Tuesday, October 12 and  
Thursday, October 28, 2021

**2 separate tour groups:** First at 6:30 p.m.,  
the second at 7:30 p.m.

**Where:** Brownsville Heritage Museum  
1325 E. Washington Street

**Cost:** \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members. Sorry no  
refunds. To register please call: 956-541-5560

Want to uncover the spooky past of our border city? We are offering two downtown tours. The first tour begins at 6:30 pm and will be led by Dr. Tony Knopp, professor emeritus at UTRGV. The second tour begins at 7:30 pm and will be led by Michael Rodriguez. There is a 25-person limit, be sure and register early - spots will fill up fast!



### Murder, Mystery, Mayhem Tour

**When:** Saturday, October 30, 2021

**Time:** 8pm

**Where:** Old City Cemetery  
Corner of 5th Street & E. Madison Street

**Cost:** \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members. Sorry no  
refunds. To register please call: 956-548-1313

Are you in for a night full of spooky history and surprises around every corner? Join the BHA as we explore the Old City Cemetery. Inhabitants of the cemetery will come alive and share their stories of love, deceit, and horror.

Attendees should meet at the Old City Cemetery entrance gate. There is a 25-person limit, be sure and register early - spots will fill up fast!

## Welcome! NEW BHA MEMBERS

Vanessa Alaniz

Jesse & Diana Artiaga

Steven Bailey

Cynthia Lizardi - Burette

Carlos Castañeda

Laura & Gilberto Capistran

Jesus De Leon

Oralia Fernandez

Richard A. Garcia

Justin Michael Garza

Priscilla Orta

Gloria & Larry Palmer

Melissa Partain

Bill & Kathy Real

Wesley Reed

Enrique Solorzano

Karen Wilkins

### Sponsorships help make this newsletter possible!

Please call us at 956-372-1515, to inquire about newsletter sponsorship opportunities, or visit our website at [www.brownsvillehistory.org](http://www.brownsvillehistory.org) for more information.

#### BROWNSVILLE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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[www.brownsvillehistory.org](http://www.brownsvillehistory.org)

# Historical Happenings



*Cocktails With A Curator*



*Historical Happy Hour*

*Sip N' Paint*



*WaterWays Fundraiser Dinner*

## INTERN SPOTLIGHT

We are fortunate to have interns and volunteers whose time and effort help support the BHA's mission. In this issue we would like to introduce to you our fall semester interns.

### Alexander Castillo

Alexander Castillo is a junior majoring in Social Studies Composite with a Teaching Certification at UTRGV. One of the things he enjoys about his studies is how history is in constant motion and plays a major role in defining who we are on an individual scale in the form of local and national history. In the future, he hopes to shape future generations as an educator through the thoughts and opinions his students will develop by studying America's storied past. Over the course of his internship, Alexander has learned a great deal about the behind-the-scenes operations that are necessary to keep historical museums like those of the BHA running. He feels this internship has improved his overall historical knowledge and as a result plans to integrate local history into his curriculum as a future educator. Moreover, he felt it provided him with the opportunity to learn and grow as an individual and historian.

### Leonor C. Medina

Leonor C. Medina is in her last semester as a History major at UTRGV. She enjoys the various applications and opportunities a history degree provides such as work as a museum professional, law enforcement, and government jobs. Leonor recalls her interests in history started at a very young age when she worked on a diorama history project in elementary and the joy she took in creating it and the presentation. That joy developed into the goal of potentially working in a museum and applying her passion for research and setting up projects. As a result, Leonor has greatly appreciated her time with the BHA in relation to her future goals of being a museum professional. She notes that the most memorable parts of this experience have been appreciating the architecture of the Historic Alonso Building when visiting this location as well as going through the collections' vaults. Overall, Leonor has gained a deeper understanding of collections in addition to learning more about daily museum operations.

### Michelle A. Campbell

Michelle A. Campbell is a junior majoring in Social Studies Composite and Chemistry at UTRGV. In her studies, Michelle likes that she can incorporate history and other social sciences to think critically about human behavior as well as gain an in-depth understanding of the world around us. Though she finds that she is uncertain about her future goals, Michelle knows that they will pertain to education, healthcare, or a combination of the two. Throughout this internship she felt she has acquired a great deal of knowledge about much of the work that goes unseen and into presenting history to the general public. She remarks, "So far, I have really enjoyed working with the traveling exhibition Water/Ways. I am passionate about the environment, so this exhibit was right up my alley. I've had a lot of fun working with the BHA on this project." Michelle believes this internship has made her more community oriented and sees herself involved in local events related to history and community service opportunities in the future.

**Brownsville Historical Association**  
1325 E. Washington Street  
Brownsville, Texas 78520

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