



## BHA Archive Notes

*By Dr. David C. Fisher, Associate Professor at UTRGV*

In our previous newsletters, the Brownsville Historical Association has highlighted interns that are primarily students from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). Their time and efforts help support the BHA's mission and we are fortunate to have built a strong collaboration with UTRGV. This partnership has led to various exhibitions and programs over the years that benefit our community and visitors alike. In addition, it has allowed the BHA to work closely with faculty and students through our shared internship program as well as research within our collections. In this issue, we would like for you all to hear from Dr. David C. Fisher who is an Associate Professor at UTRGV that the BHA has worked closely with information developing and overseeing the current internship. His segment titled, BHA Archive Notes, touches on one of our archives and the work of another faculty member in previous years that has ultimately contributed to part of the BHA's collections.



*Dr. David C. Fisher*

board meetings, membership, and finances. Of particular interest for some are documents that fill a box or two on topics like aviation, the Port of Brownsville, Charro Days, goodwill trips to Mexico, Christmas celebrations, and papers from Judge Oscar Dancy.

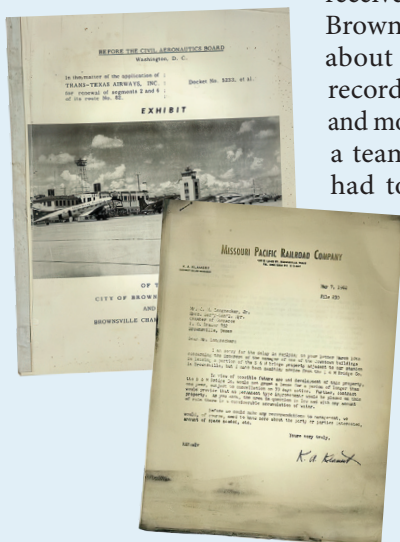
Thirty-five boxes hold miscellaneous materials organized by decade from the 1930s to the 2000s. A box from the 1960s includes files on building a better Brownsville, traffic, and developing the Padre Island National Seashore.

A quick look into any of these boxes brings back to light the day-to-day life of Brownsville as seen through Chamber of Commerce activities and interests. A file in the box labeled "Military / Veterans, Civilian Defense Council" includes clippings about a 1939 visit by the Congressional Military Affairs Committee

which included then senator Harry S. Truman, who visited the port, Fort Brown, and the airport.

As the collection is processed and digitized it will provide a wealth of valuable insights on 20th-century life in Brownsville for students, genealogists, local historians, and researchers.

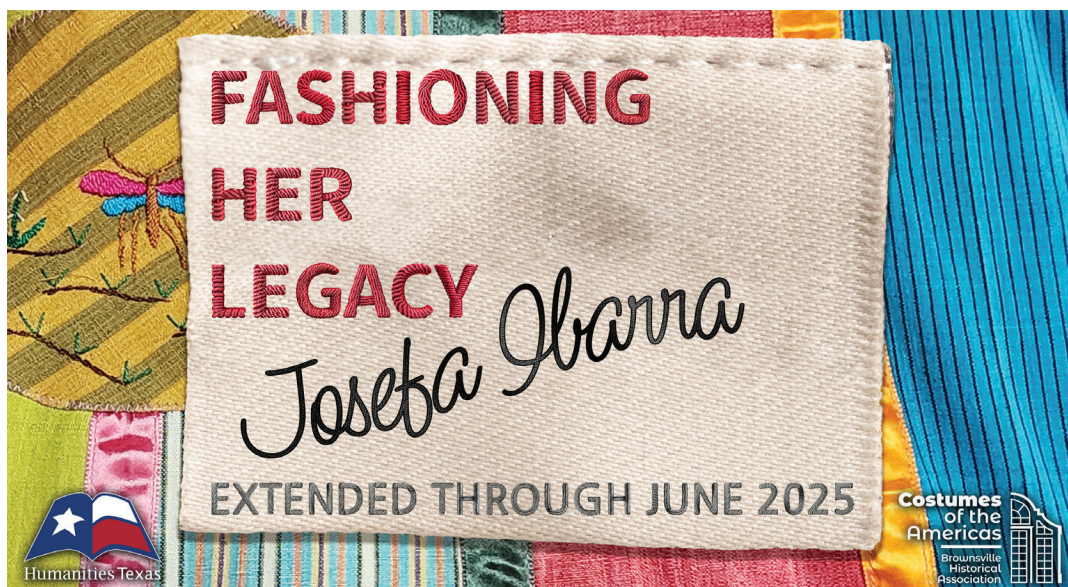
The items mentioned and included preview images of archival materials within this article are all still in the process of becoming digitized with corresponding research information. The Brownsville Historical Association's Digital Collections represent our institutional commitment to making these collections, and the ideas behind them, more accessible to more people in more ways than ever. In 2020, the BHA began scaling up its collections digitization, bringing in support required for conservation, cataloging, photography, and scanning, as well as to create and maintain the technical infrastructure required for access. While more than 1,000 artifacts are on public exhibit in Heritage Museum, Stillman House Museum, Historic Brownsville



In 2012, UT Brownsville history professor Thomas Britten received a call for assistance from the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce about salvaging 80 years' worth of records that were in danger of water and mold destruction. Britten organized a team of students, who regrettably had to throw away some damaged material but saved documents filling 106 boxes that now reside in the BHA archive. The material is organized thematically, chronologically, and accompanied by a helpful index.

Thematic boxes include records we would expect on





**THIS EXHIBIT HAS BEEN EXTENDED THROUGH JUNE 2025**

See *Fashioning Her Legacy: Josefa Ibarra* at the Costumes of the Americas Museum located at 1004 E. 6th Street.



## BHA Archive Notes, Continued

Museum, Costumes of the Americas Museum, Historic Alonso Building, and the Laureles Ranch House Museum, the Brownsville Historical Association holds many more—about 2,000 objects and hundreds more photographs and documents within our archives. Images of artifacts (a small but ever-growing subset of our entire collection) are now available online, with new objects added periodically listed under “Digital Collections” in the “Collections Overview” section of our website. Part of our digitized collections is also available on The Portal to Texas History at the University of North Texas. Please contact our Collections Manager, Aubrey Nielsen, for more information at [collections@brownsvillehistory.org](mailto:collections@brownsvillehistory.org).

# Welcome!

## NEW BHA MEMBERS

Eddie De Leon  
Emma De Leon  
Colleen Lemke

Dale & Christine Pfigst  
Edgar & Aracely Sanchez  
Silvia Patricia Solis

## Thanks for your membership renewal!

Monica Avila  
Daniel Zimmerman &  
Elnora Colley  
Enrique De La Garza II  
Jesus De Leon  
Alan & Laura Duval  
Bertita Elizondo  
Rosendo Escareno  
Jamal Colby Fayyad  
Mary Jean Garcia  
Rolando Garza  
Alice Garza &

Mahandran Rajasavian  
Guillermo Gomez  
Nyla C. Gordon  
Larry & Nancy Hodgson  
Lindsay Irwin  
Robert (Quinones) Jaime  
Dennis & Faith Johnson  
Madelyn S Marchessault  
Jim McAllen  
Steven & Sandra Morfitt  
Roxanne Perez  
Bill & Kathy Real

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Victoria Rodriguez  
Phil Samponaro  
Mr. Kevin Shropshire  
Chuck & Cristina Tijerina  
Andrea V. Ressler &  
Rita Vargas  
Ofie & Rosbel Villarreal  
Mayra Walters  
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Joan Wiley

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## BROWNSVILLE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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



# BHA kids summer camp



## DISCOVER BROWNSVILLE HISTORY

- ✓ Local Historic Museums
- ✓ Learn about South Texas Wildlife
- ✓ Historic Downtown Tours
- ✓ Wide range of activities

**June 10th - June 14th**  
**9 am - 12 Noon**  
**Ages 8-12**

**Limit to 20 children. Sorry, no refunds.**  
**Deadline to register is June 3rd by 4 p.m.**

**SIGN UP AND REGISTER NOW**  
**CALL 956-548-1313 or**  
**Email: [jgarcia@brownsvillehistory.org](mailto:jgarcia@brownsvillehistory.org)**



# HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

## BHA Annual Membership Meeting and Presentation by CHAPS Program, Manager Roseann Bacha-Garza



## Winter Walking Tour: St. Charles District



## Winter Walking Tour: Hebrew Cemetery



## Historical Happy Hour: Viva Order of the Brush!





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

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