



Banner Newsletter

Brownsville Historical Association

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July 2024

Brownsville Commemorates Amelia Earhart

On April 9, 2024, a sculpture of Amelia Earhart was unveiled at Dean Porter Park. The Dean Porter Park Renovation Inc. (DPPR) committee commissioned American sculptor, Gary Lee Price, for the piece in 2018. The sculpture is 72 inches long and 52 inches tall, and depicts Earhart in vintage flight gear relaxing on a park bench, gazing skyward. Engraved on the bench is a quote from Earhart, which reads, "Everyone has oceans to fly, if they have the heart to do it. Is it reckless? Maybe. But what do dreams know of boundaries?"



Photo Credit: Library of Congress

Amelia's ties to Brownsville's rich aviation history were cemented in 1929, when she greeted Charles Lindbergh after his historic flight from Mexico City. In Brownsville, she earned her commercial pilot's license, becoming only the fourth American woman to do so. Our city played a significant role in shaping her illustrious career.

The DPPR committee is hoping to raise awareness about Amelia's ties to Brownsville, including the fact that she received her commercial transport pilot's license at what is now known as the Brownsville-South Padre Island International Airport. The installation is accompanied by a plaque with a brief account of Earhart's local connection. Sponsors of this project include the Raul Tijerina, Jr. Foundation and the Brownsville Community Improvement Corporation.

The sculpture unveiling marked the start of the *Advocates for*

Amelia campaign that is centered around the committee's efforts to raise awareness about the local connection. The *Advocates for Amelia* campaign will serve to educate children and adults alike and will include community involvement from various local entities such as schools, museums, libraries and many others, over the course of the year. The committee members are working on developing a schedule of events to be published soon. Committee members include BHA Board President, Harry E. McNair, Jr., and Executive Director, Tara Putegnat. One of the programs that the BHA will be hosting is a birthday celebration for Amelia Earhart on July 24th. For more information, see our Calendar of Events or follow us on social media.

The Amelia Earhart bronze statue is now on display at Dean Porter Park located at 501 E Ringgold Street in Brownsville, TX.



Photos from statue unveiling at Dean Porter Park on April 9, 2024.



Beyond the Classroom: Connecting Students with Local History



Eric Gonzales at the unveiling of historical marker at the original site of Saint Joseph Academy in downtown Brownsville.

hearing about this project and welcomed his students to explore our museums and historical sites. We hope it piques their curiosity in our rich local history and we look forward to seeing them again this school year.

Mr. Gonzales teaches Texas History and A.P. Human Geography at Saint Joseph Academy. His efforts to make his students explore outside the four walls of his classroom are realized when he assigns a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark project to his Texas History students. When asked, Mr. Gonzales stated, “I want them to look at different sides and aspects of our beloved home town. I want my students to take a deeper look at historical buildings and sites in Brownsville, and make them analyze them more that they every would on their own.” He gives his middle school students a list of buildings and sites to choose from along with questions for each location that they must answer. Many of the sites are locations managed by the BHA, like the Stillman House Museum. We loved



Marker in front of Stillman House Museum; one of the BHA sites associated with the project.

Spring 2024 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 summer interns.

Fernanda Guzman is a freshman, majoring in History at Texas A&M University. As an avid reader, she enjoys the research and reading that accompanies her area of study as it allows her to gain new insights on events while also providing more literature to consume. In the future, Fernanda plans to earn her doctorate degree and to have her research published. In regards to her internship, Fernanda credited her time with growing and developing her interpersonal skills in different settings. She also valued the prospects of networking on a daily basis with other interns and BHA staff as well as members at the events where she volunteered. Additionally, she felt her internship has helped her prepare in analyzing historical documents and artifacts. Fernanda remarks, “This opportunity has also allowed me to engage with the local historical community which has deepened my passion for history



Fernanda Guzman

and my ability to express it with the members of the association who share this devotion to the topic as a whole.”

Saturno Enedina Gutierrez is a senior, majoring in Latin American studies at the University of Texas at Austin. One of the things she appreciates about her studies is learning about the history and varied cultures that make up Latin America as well as the impact of politics and economics. Saturno hopes to work in collections at a museum or as a curator and then use that experience to become a professor of Latin American studies. Over the course of her internship, Saturno found that it provided an opportunity to work directly with collections and learn about cataloging items into the collections software. Saturno shares, “It’s definitely beneficial that this museum focuses on Texas, Mexico, and Latin America as a whole and that aligns with my interests perfectly. Also being able to get hands-on experience working with collections has further solidified my aspiration in being a part of Archival and Curatorial work in the future!”



Saturno Enedina Gutierrez

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS



BISD Student Exhibit: Autism Awareness



BISD Elementary Art Competition



Historical Happy Hour: Karaoke!



Historical Happy Hour: Sip N' Craft

Thank you for your membership renewal and continued support!

Dora & Alfredo Bermudez
 Jovita Chase
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 Ruth Ann Ragland
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 Phil Samponaro
 Fernando San Miguel
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 Henry & Martha Jo Zamarron



4th Annual Fort Velasco Day hosted by the Freeport Historical Museum

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 for more information.

BROWNSVILLE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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Welcome!

NEW BHA MEMBERS

Frank Acevedo
 Miraslava Christine Aistrich
 Monica Quick Alfaro
 Gabriela Gonzalez
 Matthew John

Jennifer Martinez
 Cecilia Quick Monks
 Rita Reger
 Nick & Yolanda Soto
 Norma Zepeda



MADE FOR MATRIMONY

Textile Exhibit

JUNE 11- NOV. 15, 2024

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