



JULY 4, 2026

AMERICA

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**Brownsville
Historical
Association**



*"Discover our History,
Heritage and Cultural Arts"*

Banner Newsletter

Brownsville Historical Association

Volume 12, Issue 3

July 2026

The Brownsville Historical Association Hosts America250 Traveling Exhibit in Celebration of Nation's Semiquincentennial

The Brownsville Historical Association invites the public to view a new temporary exhibit, *Texas America250*, on loan from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) through December 30, 2026.

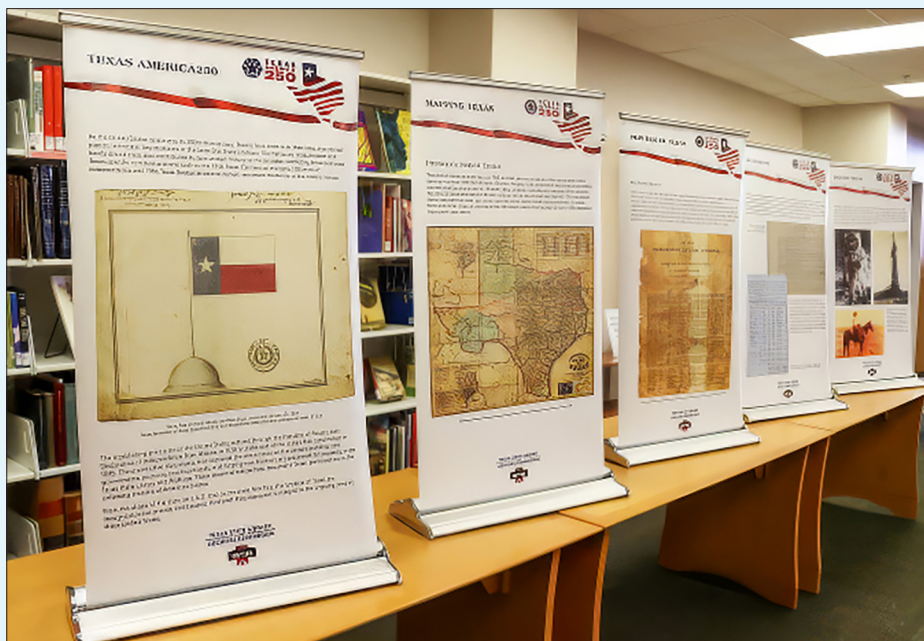
Highlighting historically significant Texas Treasures from TSLAC's collections, *Texas America250* will be loaned to local public libraries, schools and other community organizations starting in summer 2025 and continuing throughout the semiquincentennial year of 2026.

The *Texas America250* exhibit highlights historically significant Texas Treasures from the State Archives, encouraging all Americans to explore the story of the Lone Star State over the past 250 years. From Spanish missions to the space race, the landscape, culture, economy and people of Texas have played essential roles in the development of the United States.

"We are so excited to bring this traveling exhibit to the community," said Aubrey Nielsen, BHA Collections Manager. "This is a great way for Texans of all ages to learn more about the state's role in U.S. history and explore some of our most treasured documents, photographs and artifacts."

TSLAC also invites Texans of all ages to join its statewide Texas America250 Reading Challenge in 2026. Additional

resources from TSLAC's extensive library collections, the Talking Book Program and the Texas Center for the Book



will be available later this year. Bookmark www.tsl.texas.gov/america250/ to stay informed about upcoming America250 programming.

Texas America250 will be on view through December 30, 2026 at The Historic Brownsville Museum, 641 E. Madison Street, open Tuesday through Saturday 10:00am – 4:00pm.

For more information, visit www.brownvillehistory.org or call 956-548-1313.

This project is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services.



**TEXAS
AMERICA
250**

TEXAS STATE LIBRARY
ARCHIVES COMMISSION

TEXAS
SUMMERLEE
LIBRARY ARCHIVES
FOUNDATION

★ *Celebrate and Learn* ★
our nation's history
THROUGH YOUR LIBRARY

Preservation in Progress

Brownsville is the second most historic city in Texas and the most historic city south of San Antonio. In 2019, the National Park Service designated central Brownsville as a Brownsville National Historic District. Spanning approximately 76.5 acres, the district encompasses roughly 30 city blocks and includes 349 historically significant buildings in the heart of downtown. This remarkable concentration of historic architecture reflects Brownsville's rich heritage and the community's ongoing commitment to preserving its historic resources. In this issue, we highlight two preservation projects currently underway: the Neale House and the restoration of the 1877 building at the Historic Alonso Building complex.

The Neale House, built circa 1850 for Englishman William Neale, is believed to be the oldest surviving wood-frame building in Brownsville. Neale served as the city's mayor from 1858–1859 and again from 1866–1869. Originally located on 14th Street between East Washington and East Adams streets, the house was relocated to its current site in 1950 to ensure its preservation. In 2024, the City of Brownsville commissioned Preservation Texas to prepare a Historic Structure Report for the Neale House. The report included extensive archival research, historical documentation, and a comprehensive

assessment of the building, along with recommendations to guide its future relocation and preservation. Building on those recommendations, the City of Brownsville and the Brownsville Historical Association (BHA) have reached an agreement to relocate the Neale House to Linear Park in the Mitte Cultural District, where it will undergo a complete restoration and begin a new chapter as an important community landmark. The estimated cost of the relocation is \$400,000, representing a significant investment in preserving one of Brownsville's oldest and most historically significant structures for future generations.

Maintaining historic structures is an ongoing commitment, as preservation extends well beyond the completion of a restoration project. In addition to the rehabilitation of the Neale House,

the Brownsville Historical Association is undertaking significant improvements to the Historic Alonso Building Complex. One focus of this effort is the 1877 Building, a one-story rectangular brick structure with a raised basement located behind the Historic Alonso Building. Plans call for the building to be integrated into the existing multipurpose venue, expanding its use as a gallery space while supporting private rentals, educational programs, and community events.

Preservation is an investment in Brownsville's future as much as it is a commitment to its past. Projects like the relocation and restoration of the Neale House and the rehabilitation of the 1877 Building ensure that these historic landmarks remain active, relevant, and accessible to future generations. Through thoughtful planning, dedicated

stewardship, and continued community support, the Brownsville Historical Association is preserving the city's unique architectural heritage while creating vibrant spaces that inspire learning, cultural engagement, and civic pride. As these efforts move forward, they reinforce Brownsville's identity as one of Texas' most historically significant communities and demonstrate that historic preservation is an ongoing commitment that benefits generations to come.



Neale House Photograph #1, photograph, Date Unknown; Texas Historical Commission.



Rendering of the 1877 Building.

Welcome New BHA Members!

Jeremy & Cristina Bergeaux	Iliana Hernandez
Oscar E. & Dr. Julieta Garcia	Emmy Martinez
Erik Ivan Hernandez	Nicholas Reiter

Thanks for your membership renewal!

Emily Alpert & Bertha Janis	Megan McDonie
Donna Clanton	Shannon Silva & Dante Pensa
James & Marta DiGregorio	Roxanne Perez
David Fisher & Jennifer Cahn	Cyndie & Lyon Rathbun
Paula Hecht	Olivia Rodriguez
Lindsay Irwin	Juan Velez
Dennis & Faith Johnson	Jeffery Wilde & Martha
Leroy Lopez	Castanuela
Joe & Janelle Martinez	Henry & Martha Jo Zamarron

BROWNSVILLE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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Please call us at (956) 541-5560, to inquire about newsletter sponsorship opportunities, or visit our website at www.brownsvillehistory.org for more information.

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

BISD Student Exhibit: Art Without Limits: A Celebration of all Abilities



Historical Happy Hour: South Texas Wildlife



Texas Association of Museums 2026 Annual Conference



Nailed it! A Journey through Preservation: Historic Downtown Brownsville



Flags for the Fallen: Memorial Day at the Old City Cemetery



Museum After Dark



BHA Kids Summer Camp

F I L M P R E M I E R E
**LOS TEJANOS:
A 500-YEAR HISTORY**

SEPTEMBER 16
DOORS 6:00 P.M.
SCREENING 7:00 P.M.
HISTORIC ALONSO BUILDING
510 E. ST CHARLES STREET



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Brownsville, Texas 78520