



Volume 2, Issue 12

PAPHA Newsletter

December 2008

# You are invited!

The public is welcome to attend a most unusual housewarming party - the open house for the first historical museum in Port A.

Meet at the Community Center, 408 N. Alister St. in Port Aransas, from 5-8pm, on Thursday, Dec. 11.

PAPHA friends and supporters will inaugurate the Port Aransas Museum by socializing in the Community Center while waiting a turn for a guided tour of the new museum. Refreshments donated by Miss K's Catering will add to the evening's enjoyment.

The Museum Docents will take small groups at a time to provide a personal viewing for each of those interested.

No entrance fee will be charged, but a housewarming gift would be appreciated. Of course, cash is always welcome, too.

On Wednesday evening from 4-6 p.m. a special preview for old Port Aransas founding families will be held.

They will also gather in the Community Center for refreshments and to join a guide for a special museum preview.

The museum will be open to the public on a limited schedule beginning Friday, Dec. 12. Hours of operation will be Friday and Saturday, Dec. 12 and 13 and Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 18-20, 1 to 5pm each day. After

See 'Invitation' on Page 2

### Inside this Issue:

<i>Musical fundraiser</i> .....	Page 2
<i>Waterway</i> .....	Page 2
<i>Not there yet</i> .....	Page 3
<i>Christmas Past</i> .....	Page 3
<i>Corpus Christi Pass</i> .....	Page 4
<i>Membership plea</i> .....	Page 4

## 'Twas the Night before Opening

'Twas the night before opening, when all through the house,  
our craftsmen were busy, yes, even my spouse.

The fixtures were hung and put into place,  
in hopes that tomorrow, ya'll will show us your face.

The children are welcome, as well as their folks,  
Dr. Fucik will tell us all his corny jokes.  
Everyone will laugh, because he is funny,  
Mrs. Bundy will be there, trying to raise money.

To Jane and to Betty, it just must be said,  
without all your efforts, our dream might be dead.  
To all our contributors, from every fund drive,  
because of your efforts, our dream stays alive.

Just what to your wondering eyes will appear,  
is the end of our efforts now drawing near.  
When we all work together, you'll see what we get;  
by helping each other, our goals can be met.

When we moved this old house, no one could have guessed,  
this labor of love would be such a mess.

Our Garden Club planted trees and the grass;  
the City's new lighting adds a real touch of class.

The moon on the breast of the new planted trees,  
diminished our vision of Bruce on his knees.  
He used a shovel, a hoe and a rake,  
toiling tirelessly for hours, all for your sake.

Lara, our mover, sat the house down  
on posts and beams set by Mayor Brown.  
In a location provided by the leaders of our City,  
our gateway to "Old Town" now looks mighty pretty.

Volunteers with enthusiasm showed up en mass,  
now we have a museum that's really first class.

If you have history that you want to share,  
we can record it on video 'cuz Mark will be there.

In our new gift shop, you'll find the plain and the fancy,  
exciting new stuff, all handpicked by Nancy.  
Big thanks for our newsletter, published by Pam,  
I can't think of a rhyme, so I'm in a real jam.

For all those with names I can't find a rhyme  
I can't say enough, we appreciate your time.  
But a huge thanks to all, for hanging in tight.  
Happy Grand Opening to all, please join us this night.

Sharon Stricker

# A Musical, Historical fundraiser set for Jan. 29

If you like great concert music followed by a jam session by “oldies but goodies” then you won’t want to miss the Port Aransas High School Band Concert

Museum – a Community Project that will open in December 2008.

In addition to an enjoyable concert, attendees will have a chance to win a door prize of four hockey tickets.

Adult tickets will cost \$10.00, student tickets - \$5.00 and children five years and younger will get in free. Gee, I guess I’ll get out my old Artley flute, polish the silver, replace



the pads, and head for the civic center Performance on Thursday, January 29, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Civic Center. All former Port Aransas band members are invited to bring their instruments to the concert and jam a song or two with the Marlin band after their performance. This could really be an historical event – hopefully an annual event. PAPHA – Port Aransas Preservation and Historical Association will host this “fun” and “fund” raiser for the new Port Aransas

Thursday, January 29, 2009 to join in the tunes. Mr. Cole will post the music parts on the district high school band



website for the former band members to access for practice. Mr. Cole will have a practice for the former band members on Wednesday evening January 28, at 7:00 p.m. at the high school band hall for those who are in town. He will also offer another practice with the current Marlin band and former



## The Dynamic Aransas Pass Waterway

The history of the Aransas Pass is richly diverse. “Six flags over Texas” is a popular state theme, but very few places can claim to have literally had the six ensigns fly over them, but the Aransas Pass can...in fact, it can even claim a seventh flag!

Come to hear a one hour presentation exploring the pass from the times of the Karankawa natives to the current day, to include the Aransas Pass Folles: the 40 years of bad judgments and ridiculous

decisions that unfolded during the construction of the pass jetties.

The exciting and informative talk with photos and maps will be held Tuesday, Jan. 8, in the Community Center, 408 N. Alister St. The Port Aransas Preservation and Historical Association is the sponsor of the event.

John Guthrie Ford will be the speaker. A PowerPoint presentation by Mark Creighton will be included.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

band members at 8:00 a.m. Thursday morning also at the high school band hall. For those rushing in to town for that evening he will meet with both groups at the civic center at 6:00 p.m. before the 7:00 p.m. Marlin band performance. If former band members would like more information or just want to let us know you can attend you can email Sylvia Buttler at [buttler@paisd.net](mailto:buttler@paisd.net).

## Invitation Continued from Page 1

closing for the holiday weekends, it will re-open in January.

Contact interim museum director Nancy Phillips at 749-0321 or [Nancy@seminoleoklahoma.com](mailto:Nancy@seminoleoklahoma.com) to donate items for the museum.

Housewarming gifts may be chosen from the following list.

### Items needed for the museum

- #10 envelopes;
- adhesive tapes and dispensers;
- air freshener for bathroom;
- bathroom trash receptacle;
- CDR and CDRW discs;
- cleaning supplies-Windex, toilet cleaner, etc.;
- computer paper, multi-purpose, case or ream;
- computer photo quality paper;
- digital camera (6-10 megapixel);
- electric pencil sharpener;
- floor dust mop;
- hanging file folders;
- manila folders and envelopes;
- note pads;
- packaging tape and dispenser;
- paper clips, in holder, various sizes;
- paper towels;
- pencil holder;
- pens and pencils;
- postage stamps;
- pump soap for bathroom;
- ready to print labels in sheets;
- rolling desk chair;
- ruler and t-square;
- scissors and shears;
- stapler and staples;
- step stool;
- swifter wet jet and refills;
- toilet paper;
- vacuum cleaner with attachments.

# OPEN, BUT STILL RUNNING HARD ... WE ARE NOT THERE –YET !!

BY PAPHA BOARD MEMBER BETTY BUNDY

PAPHA needs your help to reach the mountain peak that after crossing, will finally allow us to reveal the history of Port Aransas. It will be laid out in inspiring interactive exhibits, both technological and mechanical, which will excite our children, and make them proud to be Port Aransas.

The efforts of the Garden Club, PAPHA, City Council and city staff, and the members of Port Aransas Boatmen inc. have given us a super building and park-like setting, which with the restored and renovated Community Center will, I am sure, become known as the Crown Jewel of Old Town.

**Shop for the season and help fund the museum ...** Our gift shop inside the museum has the 2009 calendar, postcards, books, tote bags, t-shirts, photos, candles and much more.

-----  
Make a donation to PAPHA before Dec. 31 and receive a charitable contribution form from this 510(c)(3) non-profit organization.

PAPHA board members, helped by many volunteers - especially our newly trained docents - have brought us this far. We are expecting to soon sign a contract with one of the four Museum Design Companies that we have vetted. Their efforts on our behalf will not come cheap, but will put us on Tourism maps all over the country. We need your help, through annual membership and with participation in all of the upcoming fundraisers.

On Friday and Saturday, Dec. 12-13, and Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Dec. 18-20, the museum will be open to the general public from 1-5 pm. It will be closed for the holidays and open back up Thursdays through Saturdays each week (times to be determined.).

On Thursday, Jan. 29, the Port Aransas High School band is sponsoring a concert to raise money for the museum. Tickets will be on sale at the museum, the Chamber of Commerce-Tourist Bureau and on the new museum Web site which will be online by January (URL to be announced). There will be door prizes. Get your tickets early!

On Saturday, Feb. 14, the PAPHA online

auction will open and run online through Wednesday, March 4, giving everyone in Port Aransas and the whole USA an opportunity to bid on some fabulous items, trips, sports events etc. Following a pause in the bidding of two days, the auction will continue in Port Aransas. The SILENT AUCTION will open to the public from 3-6pm in the museum following the OLD TOWN FESTIVAL parade.

At 7pm, the Community Center will open for an evening of fun including a sit-down dinner, music, LIVE AUCTION, and if someone pushes back the tables, DANCING in the aisles. Tickets available at the museum, the Chamber of Commerce and the Web site will be \$50/person with a cash bar. Ya'll come!

## Port A Christmas Past

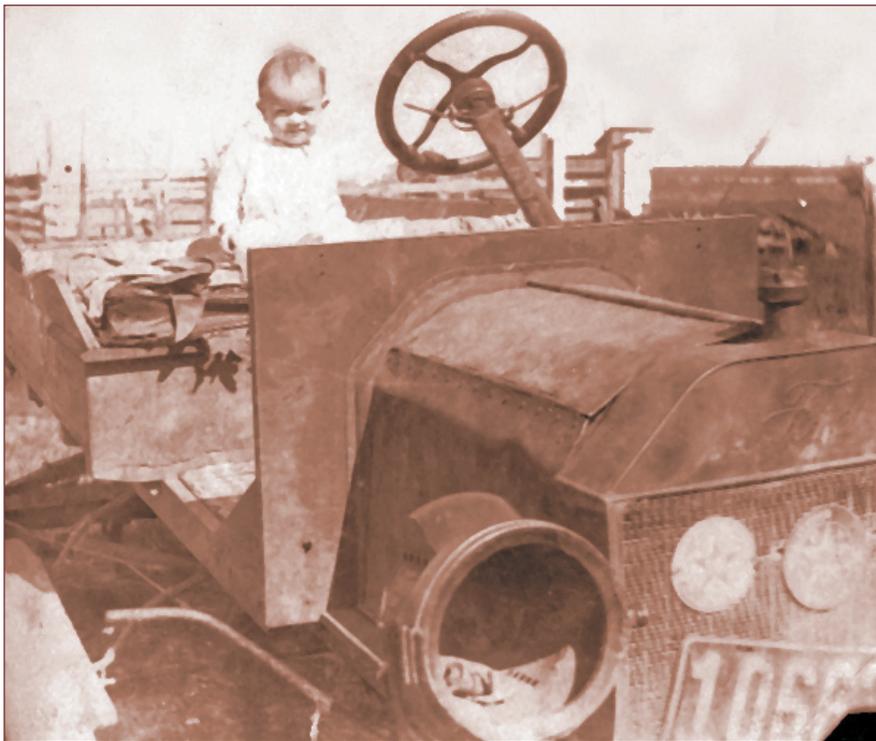
BY JOHN FUCIK

Several sources, but mostly recollections of Marcy Mathews Ward Thomas, indicate Port A's Christmas season back in the 30s and 40s was always a community-wide celebration.

It was the custom on Christmas Eve and Day for folks to amble from house to house, usually to share several kinds of spirits.

After the Community Center was built, it was the site of the Christmas Eve kids party, where some portly citizen dressed as Santa Claus would distribute some sort of gift to every child in attendance... which usually meant every child in town. The gifts were provided by town civic clubs and other organized groups. During World War II when an Army unit was stationed here to guard the Island and ship channel, one of its member's (Sgt?, Lt.? Gallagher?) musical talents were enlisted to lead the ecumenical Christmas pageant staged at Community Presbyterian church. Then it was the ONLY Christmas pageant in town and everyone was involved.

Marcy said the Mathews clan almost always gathered for Christmas dinner, singing, and games at her Aunt Dodie Moore's house on Alister Street. From her list of likely attendees, some 30 to 40 people were packed into that rather ordinary sized home. Now THAT would be real togetherness!



Tom Teller

PAPHA archives

# Corpus Christi Pass and the First Northern Visitors

BY JOHN G. FORD

Before the Packery Channel opened in 2006, the Corpus Christi Pass was the southern boundary of Mustang Island. During the 19th century, this pass could

provide easy access to the Corpus Christi maritime docks: from the Gulf, sail through the pass and then straight across the bay to Corpus. Typically, however, that did not happen; instead, ships used the Aransas Pass, which meant a much longer route to Corpus. (There was no CC Ship Channel until 1926.) With the CC Pass route being shorter, why did the economic and social development of Mustang Island focus around the Aransas Pass?

The answer is that the CC Pass had this fatal flaw: it could quickly silt-in to the point of being impassable. Accordingly, mariners began sailing to the open Aransas Pass, and the CC Pass faded into obscurity. Nevertheless in the following way this pass did earn a place in Island history.

In the Fall of 1863 the Confederates had an artillery emplacement—Ft. Semmes— at the north end of Mustang Island, and a Federal named T.E.G. Ransom was given the job of neutralizing this position. General Ransom's plan was to sail his troops to the CC Pass, cross through it, and then sail up the back of the Island to assault the Rebel stronghold from the west. However the Federals found the pass too silted-in for passage, and so to reach Ft. Semmes they were forced to march up the Island at night. This arduous exercise caused an Iowa regiment commander to complain incessantly to the troops. That so rankled General Ransom, that when the fort fell and the Federals moved on, Ransom left the grouser and his regiment to garrison Mustang, an inglorious duty lasting eight long and boring months. And that is how the good folks of the Hawkeye State became the very first Northerners to winter-over (1863-64) on the fair shores of Mustang Island...all because of the impassable Corpus Christi Pass.

## Membership Drive Plea

BY PAPHA CORRESPONDANCE SECRETARY SYLVIA BUTTLER

It is so hard to believe that a dream and a vision just a few years back is now a reality. The Port Aransas Museum - a Community Project - will open on Thursday, Dec. 11, with a reception for the public.

The history of Port Aransas, fascinating from the Karankahua Indians to the construction of the jetties, will be told.

We are extremely proud of the new museum and know you will want to be a part of this beautiful project. Stop by the museum; check out the personalized brick pavers that line the walkways and take in the beauty of the newly remodeled Community Center and fabulously landscaped front entrance.

PAPHA invites everyone to be a part of the future of Port A by becoming a member or paying their annual membership dues for 2009. Please join today ... as you are a part of Port Aransas history.

### Annual memberships are as follows:

- Individual** - \$25 per year
- Family** - \$30 per year
- Business** - \$50 per year
- Students** - \$2 per year

- Students with class or group** - \$1/yr
- Clubs/Organizations** - \$1 per member a year - \$25 max.
- Lifetime** - \$1000

### Supporting Memberships:

- Decade** - \$26 - \$50 per year
- Century** - \$51 - \$100 per year
- Epoch** - \$101 - \$500 per year
- Millennium** - \$501 - \$1000

### Send payment to: PAPHA, PO Box 677, Port Aransas, TX 78373

Include name, address, phone number, email address, date, membership type.

- 4 x 8 brick pavers - \$50**
- 16 x 16 brick pavers - \$300**

Order forms for brick and blocks are available at the museum or contact Brick Chairman Betty Bundy at 361-749-3406 or at [ggbun7@centurytel.net](mailto:ggbun7@centurytel.net).

The 16" x 16" blocks hold up to 12 lines with 30 characters on each line. The 4" x 8" brick pavers hold three lines with 14 letters on each line.



Rocks for the jetties carried by rail

PAPHA archives

**COMING SOON** ... watch your January newsletter for the online auction web site where you can "**Bid For Good**" for the Port Aransas Museum, the newest jewel in the Port Aransas crown.