



# Friends of Monument Hill/Kreische Brewery Newsletter

## February 2016

Volume 29, Issue 02

### *Mission Statement*

*To impart to the people an understanding and appreciation of the Monument Hill and Kreische Brewery Sites while managing and conserving these cultural and natural resources for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.*

Friends of Monument Hill  
and Kreische Brewery  
State Historic Sites  
414 State Loop 92  
La Grange, Texas 78945

Phone (979) 968-5658  
Fax (979) 968-5659

Park:  
[monument.hill@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:monument.hill@tpwd.texas.gov)  
Friends: [fomhkb@cvctx.com](mailto:fomhkb@cvctx.com)



### FROM THE HISTORIC SITES SUPERINTENDENT

Is an early spring is on the way? If you've been outside these past few weeks, you would have to agree that spring may already be here. We're hoping this beautiful weather leads into a productive wildflower season in the next several weeks. This beautiful weather has also brought out many visitors to the park as we have had some busy weekends lately.

The change in the weather and the passing of the Christmas season brings lots of activity in the park. Several tour busses and guided tours are scheduled in the coming months as well as weddings and groups visits. We hope to see you here at the park soon to be a part of all that's going on!

--Dennis Edd Smith

### MUSEUM DONATION

Members of The Friends of Monument Hill & Kreische attended the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission meeting on January 21<sup>st</sup> at our Austin Headquarters for a mock check presentation. John and Joan Rice as well as Tim and Christine Seubert represented the Friends Group and presented a mock check to the park for \$50,000. This is for the donation made to assist and expedite the museum renovation project here. Half of this amount will be paid in early February with the maturation of one of the certificates of deposit. The other half of the donation will

come later in the summer. Officials with TPWD estimate that the project will cost between \$100,000 and \$150,000 to complete. Actual work in the museum will not begin until late 2016 or early 2017 following completion of project planning and design.



We greatly appreciate the support that the Friends Group continues to provide to the park in the many special events and projects it continues to be a part of. We look forward to the process of renovating the museum and the enhancements that will come with it. We ask for your patience through this long process. Please stay tuned for further information and updates.

### PROJECTS

Along with the museum project, we have several other projects in the works! Although the "ball" has begun to roll on the preservation project at the Kreische House, there is little to report. Recently, our historic architects and archeologists have been trying to determine what type of water barriers were installed during the first preservation efforts following TPWD's acquisition of the Kreische property

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in 1977. We hope to hear more from them in the coming months. This project includes re-roofing the house and smokehouse; floor, window, wooden siding, and plaster repair; repainting; interior wall treatment; electrical upgrades; and many more needs. The brewery ruins were also evaluated for immediate repair needs. However, the Kreische House is the main focus of this project. At this point, there is not a timeline established for completing the needed repairs.

We are getting much closer to completion of the nature trail signs that the local Texas Master Naturalists helped work on several months ago. We are hoping to have these completed, approved, and in hand by early spring. Once those are in-hand, we will schedule a work day to help get these installed throughout the Kreische Woods Nature Trail.

We are also getting closer to completion of the interpretive signs for the Kreische Brewery ruins. There are six signs in the works to be installed around the ruins to interpret what our visitors can see. We are excited to have these completed as there are no interpretive signs in that area of the park.

interpretive signs are completed, we would like to plan a "Grand Re-Opening" of our lower trails. We want to show off to the public what



we have all accomplished together. More details will be coming in the next few months.

### JOHN AND ORVILLE RICE

While at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's headquarters in Austin, John Rice found a special surprise. Along the walls of the main lobby of the building were several large displays of artwork drawn by one of John's cousins, Orville Rice.

Orville Rice was an accomplished artist that drew many wildlife related pictures for the then "Fish and Game Magazine." John explained that this father and Orville's father were brothers. John was excited to see Orville's work proudly displayed in our headquarters building in Austin. John and Orville are descendants of Thomas McClure Rice, one of the Texans killed in the Dawson Massacre and who is buried here at Monument Hill.

### TRIP ADVISOR

We were recently notified that Monument Hill & Kreische Brewery SHS has been selected by Trip Advisor as the "Best Thing to Do" in La Grange. Trip Advisor is a well-respected and popular website that collects citizen reviews on attractions, restaurants, hotels, and any place of business that someone might visit while on a "trip." The reviews of the park are great including compliments about

the staff and docents. We received a rating of 4.5 out of 5 stars. I'm not sure what happened to the other half of the 5<sup>th</sup> star, but we'll work on it! 😊 The Texas Quilt Museum and the Jersey Barnyard followed the park to complete the top 3 attractions in La Grange.

### 180<sup>TH</sup> TEXAS INDEPENDENCE

This year marks the 180<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Texas Revolution and birth of the Republic of Texas. Many historical programs celebrating or commemorating events of the Texas Revolution will be marking the 180<sup>th</sup> year milestones. One of the more local events is the Texas Independence celebration at Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site. This year's event is on March 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. The staff at their park have invited us to host an information table/booth for our park during that weekend. We will have Friends Group members working on those two days to promote and inform the public about our site and our special events. We are asking for volunteers to help with this booth. If you are able to help us out, please let us know here at the park office.

### MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT & DOCENT CLASS

The park staff and Friends Group members will soon start a new Docent Class. As of right now we have a few new potential docents signed up to take the class. We will be starting the class here shortly in mid to late February. If you, or someone you know, would like to be a part of this class, please call or come by and let us know. Even if you have already taken the Docent class and would like a "refresher," please discuss this with us and we'll be glad to have you sit in on a few classes.

As in every volunteer-type organization, more members are always a welcomed and much needed addition. Recruitment of new members has been a little slow these past couple of years. The ranks of the Docents has dropped over the recent years. Too, the number of active volunteers to help organize and work during Texas Heroes Day



We also have some trail repair work to be done at the head of the Kreische Woods Nature Trail. We are working on the planning and approval for re-routing this small section that was washed out several times last spring. When all is ready to begin this project, we will be asking for your help. Once this repair and the installation of all of the new

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and Trail of Lights has always struggled to meet our needs. That being said, we need your assistance to help recruit new, active members. If you know of anyone interested in helping the park and the Friends Group in any capacity, please let us know.

### OFFICER ELECTIONS

In the next couple of months the Friends Group will need to elect Officers and Board of Directors. The Executive Committee are all eligible for re-election to their respective positions (President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer).

We will need to elect or re-elect two Board of Director positions this year. The position currently held by Joan Rice is up for election. Joan is finishing the last year of her second term on the Board of Directors. Christine Seubert is eligible for re-election to a second 3-year term on the Board of Directors. We need members to consider stepping up into these roles to help support the organization and the park. The roles of officers are not difficult roles, but ones that are very important to the forward progress of the organization!

### EASTER SUNRISE SERVICES

In cooperation with the First United Methodist Church of La Grange, the park will host Easter Sunrise Services at 7am on Easter Sunday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. The community is invited to attend. You are encouraged to bring your lawn chair and enjoy the service on the park lawn near bluff.

### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

It's never too early to prepare for the next Texas Legislative Session. The 85<sup>th</sup> session of the Texas State Legislation will begin in January 2017 which is less than one year away. Budget planning has already begun and each state agency will soon submit their Legislative Appropriations

Requests. Now is the time for you to continue to let our legislators know about your support for your parks. The next Legislative Session may again be a quite difficult session for all state agencies as questions of the national and state economies linger which will affect our State's budget. As always, funding for our Texas State Parks may take serious cuts over the next couple of years if state-wide budget outlooks are not favorable. We really need you to show your support to our legislators during this session.

### SPRING BREAK IS COMING!

Spring Break will be here soon and we would love to have your help. For the past few years, members of the Friends Group have volunteered a few hours of their time to sit at the Kreische House and allow visitors experience the house. You do not have to be a docent to help out. All we would need someone to do is sit under the porch downstairs and allow folks access into the house. This will also help prevent any vandalism during these high visitation periods. We are looking for help on any and every day between March 12<sup>th</sup> and March 20<sup>th</sup>. If you can help us out on any of those days, even for just a couple of hours, please contact the park and let us know. Thanks in advance!!!

### VOLUNTEER HOURS

If you have been working on park related projects such as Trail of Lights, etc., we need you to report your volunteer hours. We do our best to record your volunteer hours that are performed here at the park, but we need to know about those hours worked off-site. The park is required to submit a monthly volunteer report including all volunteer hours worked for the park. This information is compiled state wide and is submitted to the Texas Legislation annually. Accurate information helps the Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept prove that there is an important link

between the parks and their local communities and park user groups. Please submit your volunteer hours to the park before the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month.

### DID YOU KNOW??

February 1842: General Rafael Vasquez led a group of 700 Mexican troops into Texas to attack San Antonio. They later entered and attacked San Antonio on March 5<sup>th</sup>.

February 5, 1843: The surviving Texan prisoners from the Battle of Mier arrived at Saltillo, Mexico. They were still on foot and many had lost their hats, worn out of their shoes, and were not being fed sufficiently.

February 10, 1843: All Mier captives arrived at El Rancho Salado. Ewen Cameron was determined to make his escape. He secretly consulted with his "inner circle" of officers to plan a morning escape.

February 11, 1843: At Hacienda Salado in north central Mexico, a group of 188 Texian prisoners from the Battle of Mier escaped from their Mexican captors. Led by Captain Ewen Cameron, these Texans escaped in an attempt to make good their return to Texas and to avoid imprisonment in southern Mexico.



February 24, 1846: Andreas Amman, a carpenter, immigrated to Texas arriving in Galveston. He later became Heinrich Kreische's building partner.

February 28, 1855: Heinrich Kreische filed for land in Mason County with the General Land Office (possibly now in Kimble County).

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*Happy Birthday!*



If you have a birthday that has not been acknowledged here, it's because we don't have your birthdate! Please send it to

us at [fomhkb@cvctx.com](mailto:fomhkb@cvctx.com) or call the Park.

- Paul Schenck Feb 2
- Kenneth Coleman Mar 12
- Katy Beauford Mar 15

## Dates to Remember

VOLUNTEER HOURS need to be turned in by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the following month. Anyone that has not called or handed in his or her hours, please do so! Remember to turn in any hours already expended in committee meetings, as well.

MONTHLY FRIENDS' MEETING - will be held on Monday, February 22nd at 7 PM at the Park headquarters.

TOUR OPPORTUNITIES Tour guides are **always needed on weekends**. If you can help, contact the park office.

<p><b>Wafer Ash</b> <i>Ptelea trifoliata</i></p>  <p>An important nectar source for pollinators, this tree is responsible for hosting many butterfly larvae, including the eastern tiger swallowtail and the plant can be consumed by humans, the fruit has an odd flavor taste many people find unpleasant.</p>	<p><b>Texas Persimmon</b> <i>Diospyros texana</i></p>  <p>The Texas persimmon is a host tree for gray hairstreak butterflies and Hymettus spp. butterflies. The ripe fruit is eaten with a fuzzy skin to pulp, and the seeds are hard and bitter. The fruit is consumed by humans as well. The fruit is consumed by humans as well. The fruit is consumed by humans as well. The fruit is consumed by humans as well.</p>
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