

A View Through History  
With Kyle Schiller Barrett  
Milam County Historical  
Museum Director

## **County Museum To Host New, Exciting Events During SS&W Festival**

Texas History Programs, Local Artisans Displays, and Live Handcraft Demonstrations will all be featured on Saturday, October 14, at the Milam County Historical Museum in downtown Cameron. In conjunction with the Cameron Chamber of Commerce's Steak, Stein, and Wine Festival the museum will be welcoming visitors to several unique displays and activities. Museum volunteers and staff will be on hand that day to host various activities during the annual fall festival. Museum hours will be extended for these events from 9:00am until 5:00pm.

Beginning that morning, our local self-proclaimed "Stitch Witches" Quilting Guild will be on hand giving quilting demonstrations at the museum. These ladies will also be relaying stories to visitors on how quilting skills have been passed down through many generations in Milam County. Just ask and they will be happy to show you how quilting is done. Also, many historic quilts from our county's past will be on display for everyone to see. The MCHM is proud to house quilts made by early citizens of our area. Many of these treasures date back to the late 1800's and even includes one from the American Civil War Era. Other quilts in the collection depict the names of their creators and intricate designs of the Czech and German cultures found in Central Texas. Various Milam communities such as the Marak community are represented in these displays. The Milam County Historical Museum is proud to be home base for the Stitch Witches Quilting Group. They have displayed their work here for many years and are a vital part of Milam County's rich history.

Also, joining the crafting demonstrations at the museum on October 14 will be Museum Board Vice-President Susan Larson. She is very accomplished in cross-stitch and needle-point work. Examples of Mrs. Larson's work will be on display, and she will be demonstrating her craft for the public. Plus, if you are interested in learning how to cross-stitch, Mrs. Larson will be giving instructions on how to create your own cross-stitch pumpkin. Other community members from the Cameron Public Library's "Hooks and Needles" group are expected to be demonstrating and giving instructions on knitting and crochet that same morning.

On the afternoon of October 14, the MCHM is excited to offer two programs on historical attractions and legends of Milam County History, as well as Texas History. The first of these programs will be in the form of dramatic story telling by Dr. John Pruitt. He will portray one of the Spanish Priests who first walked the historic El Camino Real de Los Tejas Trail in present-day Milam County. Dr. Pruitt has a way of taking his audience back in time to when the first Europeans encountered the Native Americans on the Texas frontier. The second program will be an informative presentation on the Texas Freedom Colony Projects by Mr. James Bradford and Dr. John Pruitt. Both gentlemen have worked a great deal in researching the Freedom Colonies and their impact on African American History in Texas. They will also be highlighting the Freedom Colonies that were established in Milam County after the Civil War. For

Milam County Natives and history buffs alike, this is not a speaking engagement to be missed. The programs will be at 1:00pm and 3:00pm respectively.

The local chapter of El Camino Real de Los Tejas Rancheria Grande will also be present at the museum that Saturday. Mrs. Paula Sisco, chapter representative, will have a table filled with information about the historic trail and the impact it has had on Milam County. She will be fielding questions about the Rancheria Grande Trail and the new exhibit "Plants of El Camino Real" which highlights the native plants and wildflowers along the trail. This is a very well researched, informative display and has been well received by museum patrons.

All the museum locations and attractions in downtown Cameron will be open to visitors during the Steak, Stein, and Wine Festival, or at least until 5:00pm that day. The public is invited to view the Old Historic Milam County Jail that dates back to 1895. The old jail building has the cells of course, the restored sheriff's quarters and office, plus it boasts a never-used fourth floor hanging tower. Kids...it's not a castle at 201 E. Main Street, but is it haunted? Well, no one really knows.

Next to the Old Jail Museum is the Newly Dedicated Barbara Harry Hajovsky Memorial Transportation Exhibit. This garage houses a vintage 1925 Cameron VFD truck and a restored 1959 McLane Company delivery truck. Both these vehicles make great photo opportunities for the entire family. As well as the porches of the Old Sneed Log Cabin which is near the transportation exhibit. Visitors can explore the historic but very rustic log cabin and see what it was like to live in rural Milam County in the 1840's. While you are exploring, don't forget to see the old Calaboose across Fannin Street from the cabin.

The Main Historical Museum in our county is located at 112 W. First Street in Cameron the County Seat. This large storefront, with flags flying at its entrance is across the Milam County Courthouse Square from the Old 1895 Jailhouse. Here volunteers and staff, led by Museum Board President Margia Barkemeyer, showcase many fine works from local artists. They also introduce visitors to the history of Milam County with both artifacts dating back thousands of years and simple treasures donated by the early families of our area. Come see for yourself that there is a lot to see and do at the MCHM.

Those interested in shopping during the SS&W festival might get an early start on Christmas gifts. The Milam County Museum is selling Limited Edition Christmas Ornaments featuring the Historic 1895 Jail. These unique treasures are a must-have for every Texan's Christmas tree. The museum gift shop also carries many books on the history of our county, which is one of the oldest in the state. Also available for sale are post cards, state and county glassware, toys, collectables, gifts, and much more. So come see us at the Milam County Museum Gift Shop, where credit cards are now accepted for purchases.

Finally, on October 14, be sure to visit our neighbors next door at the brand-new Milam County Railroad Museum and Old Town Cameron Display. It is an amazing place and is set to open next weekend. The director of the Milam County Railroad Museum, Mr. Jamie Larson and his staff have put in many months of hard work to make this Railroad Museum the premier attraction for all of Central Texas. It is an impressive exhibit and enjoyable for both young and old alike.

Regular weekly hours for the MCHM are 10am-3pm Thurs.-Saturday, or by appointment on other days. As an organization member of the Cameron Area Chamber of Commerce, we invite you to attend the Steak, Stein, and Wine Festival in downtown Cameron. So mark your calendars for Saturday, October 14, and we look forward to seeing you at the festival and our county's historic museums.