

ACHS  
P. O. Box 702  
Rockport, TX 78381  
AransasCountyHistoricalSociety.org  
(361) 729-2133



# ACHS NEWSLETTER

Volume 17 Issue 4

December 2021



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## Calendar Premiere recognizes Janie White for 16 years of calendar design and production

A large turnout for ACHS's annual Calendar Premiere Party was on hand to honor outgoing production manager Janie White on October 26.

The event also recognized the winners of the 2021 Historical Photo Contest. The winners were Kathy Kane for first and second place, and Judy Sorenson Collier for third place.

The winners, and all of the photos for the 2022 Calendar, were selected from a record number of entries for the Photo Contest. Serving as judges were Phil Albin, Donna Husak, and Chris Rice.

Janie began working with the calendar in 2007 and produced the layout for the first issue. President Cheryl Livingston on behalf of ACHS presented Janie with a carved crystal and a commemorative plaque that featured all sixteen of the calendars Janie has designed.

"The calendars with the great photos and related information are a permanent part of the Society's legacy, and we are so proud of Janie's long-time service on the project," Cheryl noted.



**ABOVE:** Janie White shows the commemorative awards she received at the annual Premiere of ACHS's Calendar of Historical Photographs. Saying that she is "retiring" from being designer and production manager of the project, Janie produced all 16 issues of the calendar, which are depicted in the framed plaque.

**BELOW:** ACHS president Cheryl Livingston presents the first place award in the Photo Contest to Mary Clare Kane, who was standing in for her daughter Kathy, who submitted both the first and second place pictures. Photos courtesy Veronika Camehl.



## FROM THE LAB: A message from the President . . . . .

We've arrived at the end of 2021 and this will be our final newsletter of this year. It's been a great year for us, in spite of the lingering pandemic and dramatic weather events, so here is a summary of this year through the lens of the Aransas County Historical Society.

The striking feature of this monumental year has been the great collaboration and cooperation between Rockport Center for the Arts, History Center of Aransas County, Aransas County Historical Commission, the Rockport Cultural Arts District and Railroad Depot, the Sesquicentennial Celebration Committee, The Rotary Club of Rockport and the Aransas County Clerk's office.

**January through June** brought increased activity to the planning of Sesquicentennial Celebration. Zoom meetings became the norm and much was accomplished by each committee. Social distancing and masks were required if people gathered as a group.



**Rockport Pilot editor Mike Probst spoke about the new Historical Marker Guide at the Sesquicentennial kickoff in January. Photo by David Murrah.**

A Sesquicentennial kick-off event was held outdoors January 30 at the History Center for Aransas County with the release of a new Historical Marker Guide and a Monument unveiled on the grounds. As construction began on the new Rockport Center for the Arts, ACHS vice president **Ty Husak** started the process in November 2020 of photographing the Kline's Café building in anticipation of its relocation.

Sales of the 2021 Calendar of Historical Photographs—the Sesquicentennial Edition-- continued well into the year. Rockport Printing wins the distinction of selling the

most calendars of all our local vendors. We appreciate them and all those who sold and continue to sell our calendars.

With pandemic protocols in place, it took some creativity to deliver 225 calendars to students at Fulton Learning Center (FLC). We utilized the school parking lot along with a short explanatory video, and staff at FLC passed out calendars to 4th grade students.



**The move of Kline's Café to its new home in downtown Rockport was documented in March and April by Ty and Donna Husak. Photo by Ty Husak.**

The exciting ground-breaking at the Rockport Center for the Arts was well attended. **Ty Husak** photographed this event. Then, when the Kline's Café move started in late March. **Ty and Donna Husak** were on hand to carefully film and photograph the event. Subsequently, a video of the Kline's Café move was uploaded to the ACHS website (ACHS1985.org) and Facebook page.

Also during the first half of the year, an exciting milestone for was the introduction of a new ACHS Logo. **Mandy Ahr** of Houston donated her time and design talents to educate us on the process of selecting a logo, designed a few prototypes to choose from, and presented us with an impressive new logo. Mandy made the process fun and painless! Mandy is the daughter of the late **Mary Lucille Jackson** who was active in

the art and history groups in Rockport for many years.

The Historical Society, History Center and Historical Commission also met to discuss and review nominations of individuals and organizations for the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Preservation Awards.

**John Freeman**, formerly of Rockport, a 1951 graduate of Rockport High School in 1951, and author of *Rockport A Childhood by the Sea*, donated a limited-edition print titled "Looking for Nagumo" by Craig Kodera. He said, "The air over Rockport in the 1940's was filled with PBYS as they trained for WWII missions. While playing on the beach we watched as they practiced their landing and take offs. I bought this painting as it reminded me of my childhood days in Rockport." Also, **Janie Collier White** donated an oil painting by Mary Ann Close McNabb of the original Aransas County Courthouse to the Historical Society.

Our annual historic photo contest always begins in May. Ever since Hurricane Harvey took our meeting place in 2017, the generous folks at Rockport's Dairy Queen have let us collect photos and paperwork for the contest from their back dining area. The year's contest ended in late June with judging occurring in early July. It's always a treat to see all the photos and hear stories as participants enter the contest. We had a record number of entries this year.

**In June**, Aransas County celebrated its 150-year history as a county with ten fun-filled days of events. ACHS co-sponsored with the Rockport Rotary Club the Founder's Day Breakfast on June 12 which officially launched the celebration. The program honored the major figures who established Rockport and succeeded in getting it named as the county seat of the new county of Aransas in 1871. ACHS Trustee and newsletter editor **David Murrah** gave the keynote speech, which is still available for viewing on the ACHS website, ACHS1985.org, at this link, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zf9uyhZrAik>

**July through December** - Another exciting summer collaboration opportunity came our way over the summer. The Rockport Center for the Arts invited the Historical Society to contribute historical photos and written content for a 40-page program book they were producing to celebrate what would have been Guy Clark's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday on November 6th. We were thrilled to be asked and you can read more of the story on page 3 of this newsletter.

Big time floods arrived in early July and slowed us down for a few days.

**July** also meant it was time for photo judging and calendar preparation. We had three amazing photo contest judges--**Phil Albin, Donna Husak** and **Chris Rice**--who selected the top three [prize winning photos as well as others to be placed in the 2022 calendar. Because it was the largest number of entries ever, the



**This photo submitted by Kathy Kane won first place in the 2021 Photo Contest. It was taken in July 1942 in downtown Rockport, after a 13-inch rainfall and is featured in ACHS's 2022 Calendar of Historical Photographs.**

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photos were outstanding and their job wasn't easy. As soon as the judging ends hundreds of hours of work commenced to get the calendars into production.

Several of us gathered facts from newspapers and other sources, and wrote photo captions. **JoAnn Morgan** provided a copy of the Mercer Log from which we compiled excerpts and organized on each page. Also, the Bee County Historical Society and Dugat family graciously allowed us to use early 1900s photos of **Jennie Rust Dugat** and **Daisy Pillman** at the Rockport Train Depot.

The calendar committee also secured twelve sponsors for the calendar, and we really appreciate the support of these organizations, businesses and individuals: **Albin Exterminating, Inc.; Aransas County Historical Commission; Friends of the Fulton Mansion; GSM Insurers, Friends of the History Center for Aransas County; Jackie Shaw; JCW Photo Restoration; John and Debbie Jackson; Karen Mella, Realtor; Rockport Center for the Arts; Rockport Cultural Arts District and Railroad Depot; and the Texas Maritime Museum.**

Summer's end brought a luncheon with County employees to culminate the Sesquicentennial activities. Those from the planning committee ate and visited with employees. **Carrie Arrington**, County Clerk of Aransas County asked ACHS to assist in a project to decipher the handwriting on handwritten marriage licenses from the late 1930s and early 1940s.

After a whirlwind of activity, the final version of the calendar was ready and premiered in October. **Janie White**, who had served as production manager for all of the 16 calendars, officially resigned from calendar duties. Janie has donated countless hours restoring photos, arranging content to fit and prepping pages for Rockport Printing. She promises to be on call for future calendar committees!

In November, in anticipation of construction of the new courthouse, Aransas County formed a Time Capsule Committee from the historical organizations, including ACHS. A safe donated by Hollon Safe Company of Corpus Christi will house the selected material in the lobby of the new building. The committee members as well as the public will be asked to contribute ideas for the contents.



The 1888 Rockport Depot, before and after reconstruction. Photos by Ty Husak.

The year also saw the acquisition and restoration of the historic 1888 Rockport Depot by the Rockport Cultural Arts District. Thanks to the energy and leadership of its director **Jennifer Day**, the Depot will play an important part in the future of downtown Rockport. We also appreciate the

role of ACHS member "**Turf**" **Overturf** and other members of the Society for lending support in helping to save one of Rockport's oldest buildings.

New projects are just around the corner. **Joseph Fox**, Site Educator at the Fulton Mansion asked if the Historical Society would be interested in working on a project for the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Hurricane Harvey, August 2022. Oral histories are being recorded this event. The Historical Society and Fulton Mansion have a long history of partnering on projects and we know this will continue.

What a year it has been, from freezes to flood, along with the lingering pandemic. We appreciate our members, the community and business supporters that assist us year-round and our Board of Trustees who are hard-working, good natured individuals that contribute great ideas for projects. They honor and respect the history of Aransas County and are always looking ahead.

—Cheryl Livingston

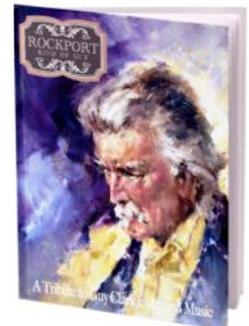
# Celebrating a Rockport Kind of Guy

By  
Ty Husak

*[Editor's note: The Rockport Center for the Arts recently staged a very successful celebration of the Guy Clark Festival which involved art, film and music related to the Grammy Award-winning American songwriter and folk singer who spent his teen years living in Rockport. Clark, who died in 2010, would have been 80 on November 6 of this year.]*

*The Aransas County Historical Society, which had previously sponsored two sold-out concert tributes to Clark in 2019, played a very important role in the planning and development of this year's celebration, and we have asked ACHS vice president Ty Husak to document the Society's participation in this year's event.]*

On Aug 9, 2021, ACHS president Cheryl Livingston and I met with Luis Purón of the Rockport Center for the Arts (RCA) and John Macy, music producer. Previously, John and Steve Russell had gotten together and came up with an idea for a fundraiser. The plan was to get some of the recording artists that had been influenced by Guy to each record one of Guy's songs. Macy would produce a CD from the songs to be sold as part of the fundraiser. Steve would paint a painting with each having some connection to one of the 12 songs that were to be recorded.



The exhibit book cover featured Steve Russell's painting of Guy Clark. Graphic courtesy Rockport Center for the Arts.

Luis then wanted to create an exhibit catalog/book which would have two pages for each song. Each pair of pages would contain an image of the Steve Russell painting, comments from Steve on the painting and something from the musician that recorded each song. Luis also wanted Cheryl and I to contribute some historical information, including images where possible, for each song that would connect Guy and/or the song back to Rockport.

Initially, we really didn't have a lot to go on beyond a rough idea of what the format would be and were not even sure what songs would be included or who would be recording them. Macy went to work contacting recording artists. The list began to grow and as each song was finalized, Steve would create a painting and we would try to figure out what we could contribute.



Guy Clark's sister Caro Dugan shows a chest that belonged to Jack Prigg, a family friend who influenced Guy's songwriting. Photo by Ty Husak.

One fairly obvious course of action was to get together with Guy's sisters Caro Dugan and Jan Clark and find out what they could contribute. When we met at Caro's home, Caro got Jan on a FaceTime call and we went over the songs that we knew about with them and gathered stories from them that

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might relate to the songs. We also copied some of Caro's family photographs.

One interesting story from this session was while we were discussing the song "Desperados Waiting for a Train". The song was based on the relationship Guy had with his grandmother's friend Jack Prigg. Jack was a kind of surrogate grandfather for the Clark kids in Monahan. While we were talking Caro pointed into the living room and said, "That's Jack's chest that I'm using for a coffee table." I came back the next day with some better lighting and took this photo of Caro and the chest.

We had numerous meetings over the next couple of months including some reviews of book design. And, Cheryl and I swapped ideas and edited our contribution.

Eventually, John Macy recorded all of the songs and completed the CD, and the Art Center dispatched us to photograph one of the sessions in San Antonio. Steve Russell finished up the last of the paintings and Luis Purón had a secured an editor to put the book together.

The Center for the Arts then hosted an opening reception for the Guy Clark Festival at its gallery on Austin St. on October 21<sup>st</sup>. The CD was playing in the background, Steve was on hand to autograph books and the paintings that he created were hanging in the gallery (and for sale). Many of the paintings sold that evening with proceeds going to RCA.

Then, to help the kickoff of the Rockport Film Festival, RCA set up a two-night Guy Clark Tribute concert with Verlon Thompson and Shawn Camp. They chose the Rialto Theater in Aransas Pass as Macy didn't feel that we had a venue in Rockport with adequate acoustics. Cheryl and I attended both nights.

The other connection that ACHS had with the Film Festival



**Elizabeth and Brad Brundrett, who serve on the ACHS Board of Trustees were the proud purchasers of Steve Russell's painting, "The Cape," which was one of the featured works at the opening of the Guy Clark Festival at the Rockport Center for the Arts on October 21. At right, Steve poses with Elizabeth at the opening event. Other board members who purchased Steve's paintings were John Jackson (Guy Clark portrait), and Cheryl Livingston (Boats to Build). Photos courtesy Elizabeth Brundrett.**

was the showing on November 14 of our Kline's Café building move time-lapse film as a part of in the Documentary Short Film category. After each of the short documentaries were shown, the film makers were invited to the stage to answer questions. It gave us good opportunity to thank those that helped save the Kline's building as well as to stress the importance of saving historically significant buildings, an important part of the mission of ACHS.

**HISTORY NEWS YOU CAN USE** —Pam Stranahan

**From the History Center**

The History Center at 801 E. Cedar Street is continuing its exhibit, "Holidays Past in the Present," through December 31. Its themed trees will delight young and old.

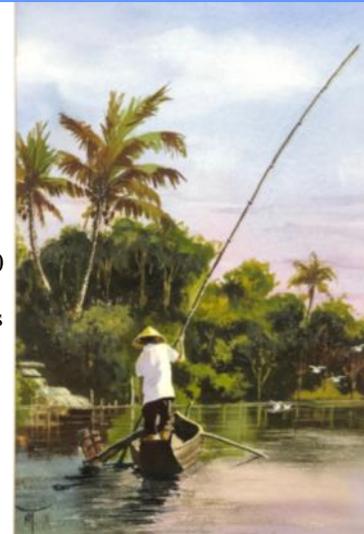
On January 22, its new exhibit, "Vietnamese Culture: 40 Years in the Coastal Bend" opens with Rockport's famous football star Dat Nguyen serving as the keynote speaker. Now a Dallas businessman, Nguyen had a distinguished career playing football for Texas A&M University and the Dallas Cowboys.

The exhibit will include posters, artifacts, and video interviews with community members. Leah Nguyen Olivia's book, *Growing Up with the Boat People*, will also be featured.

Follow-up monthly programs will complement the exhibit: February 6, 2:00 PM "A New Year's Celebration - The Year of the Tiger," March 6, 2:00 PM "Veterans Share Their Thoughts," and April 10, 2:00 PM "Cultural Arts from Vietnam." The exhibit will run through April.

For more information, see [www.thehistorycenterforaransascounty.org](http://www.thehistorycenterforaransascounty.org).

The History Center is open Fridays and Mondays from 10-2 and Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 PM.



**Vietnamese watercolor by Heip Nguyen.**

**Aransas County Historical Society**



**History in Photographs 2022**

**The 2022 Calendar is still available!**  
Order online from the ACHS at

[achs1985.org](http://achs1985.org)

or pick one up at

**Rockport Center for the Arts**

**Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce**

**Rockport Printing**

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