



HISTORIC
WAXAHACHIE, INC

Christmas Tour of Homes

2021



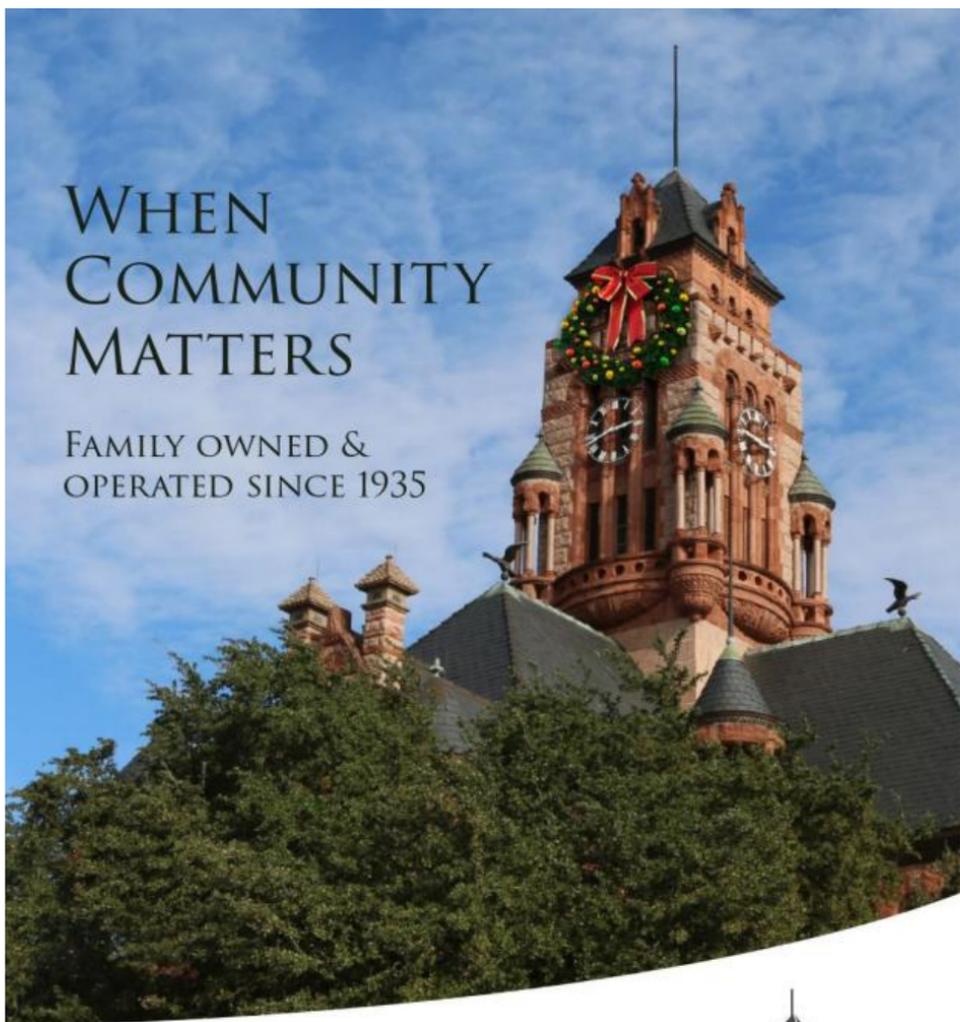
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A Note From the 2021 Chair

The holiday season is an incredibly special time, filled with hope, joy, and the opportunity to come together as a community. Growing up, my childhood tree was decorated with heritage ornaments (some passed down and others made by hand, often from a classroom) that helped tell a story of Christmases past. As an adult, that love of heritage has turned into a passion for historic homes and architectural preservation. Christmas is always special, but there is something uniquely magical about the holidays in an old home. Generations of hopes and celebrations have been seen by those walls; stories echo of simple Christmas dinners and cookies left for Santa by the fire. The heritage of our historic homes and buildings tell a greater story of our community- it's triumphs, it's aspirations, and it's struggles.

The stewardship of a historic home or building is a unique role. Homes and buildings should always fit the lifestyle of it's owners, and thankfully historic architecture is incredibly versatile. We must also recognize that historic homes and buildings will often outlast us, and as the saying goes "with great power comes great responsibility." Thoughtful decisions should be made when making any updates to a structure, as we serve as guardians of their character for future generations.

It is my hope that during this year's tour, you experience the unique joy that comes from considerate stewardship of historic structures. Old homes and buildings can be lived in and used comfortably by modern families and business, while also preserving the meaningful architectural features that tell a story that can never be recovered if we remove them. I believe that all of the owners on this year's tour demonstrate an extraordinary approach to sympathetically updating structures while also preserving the features and architecture that make them so special. Whether small or grand, our historic homes and buildings are worth cherishing.

Thank you for being part of this holiday tradition, and Waxahachie's story.

-Michelle Haye



*Merry Christmas
from all of us at*



Locations Include:

Waxahachie, Ennis, Red Oak, Corsicana, and Midlothian

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Acknowledgements & Special Thanks

The Christmas Home Tour typically takes a full year to plan and implement. Careful attention to detail, ticket holder's experiences, recruitment of homes, and the PR and marketing strategy are massive undertakings. 2021 began as a year of uncertainty, and plans for the home tour were on hold until July. Unlike previous years, the 2021 Christmas Tour of Homes was planned and executed in just five month's time, and it wouldn't have been possible without a core group of individuals tirelessly giving of their time, treasure, and talents to bring the second annual Historic Waxahachie, Inc. Christmas Tour of Homes to life.

2021 CHAIR MARKETING & PR

Michelle Haye

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RAFFLE GIVEAWAY

Amy Waters
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Join Historic Waxahachie, Inc.

PRESERVATION EDUCATION ADVOCACY

Whether you live or work in an old home or building, or just love them and the nostalgia they bring to our city, we would love to have you join us in our mission! HWI welcomes you- from the casual observer to the long time preservationist, we're a group of likeminded people from all ages and walks of life that believe in the preservation of our city.

**MEMBERSHIPS
START AT JUST \$25**

JOIN OR RENEW ONLINE





*Historic Waxahachie, Inc. is a
501(c)3 nonprofit volunteer
organization dedicated to
preservation of the historic fabric
of Waxahachie.*

RAFFLE GIVEAWAY

**FROM HISTORIC MARKERS TO ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS,
HWI SEEKS TO BE AN ADVOCATE FOR PRESERVATION IN
WAXAHACHIE. OUR GOAL IS PROTECT OUR HERITAGE FOR
PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.**





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*Wishing you a
blessed Christmas season
and Happy New Year!*



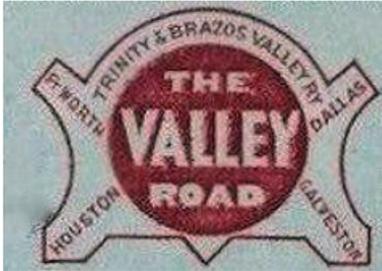
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WAXAHACHIE • MCLOTHMAN • RED OAK
BURLISON • GRANBURY • WEATHERFORD

TRINITY & BRAZOS VALLEY RAILWAY FREIGHT HOUSE

421 S COLLEGE ST.



The Trinity & Brazos Valley Railway (TBV) was chartered 17th October 1902, to build a railway between neighboring Johnson County and Beaumont. After early financial woes, T&BV operations were buoyed after being purchased by Colorado & Southern (C&S) Railway, and divestiture of half the railways' assets to Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific (CRIP) Railway provided working capital to expand.

In 1905 Waxahachie civic leaders ratcheted up efforts to land T&BV. A railroad commission, including T.A. Ferris, T.J. Cole, and others sought community investment, including a financial enticement funded by taxpayer's contributing 1-1/2% of their taxable land value. Concern was raised December 1905, when the fund was still thousands of dollars short. The funding goal was eventually achieved and the last deed guaranteeing right-of-way for the T&BV was secured February 1907. The freight depot was completed in May 1907 and train service from Dallas began July 1st.

A passenger car positioned near the freight depot served as waiting area until a new passenger station was completed. By September, bricklayers were making fast work of the new passenger station (423 S. College St.). Waxahachie benefited from a loophole allowing T&BV to make nonstop trips to and from Dallas, because they were leasing track from MKT and not bound to make stops in Lancaster and elsewhere as was MKT.

The recently renovated structure at 421 S. College Street first appeared upon the 1909 Sanborn insurance map described as a "freight house" for the Trinity & Brazos Valley Railway, later known as the "Boll Weevil Railway". The warehouse was surrounded by a large decked platform that doubled the footprint of the freight house. A large portion of the deck extended east of the structure, where freight was loaded & unloaded directly from railcars, and a narrow segment ran the length of the north side as a walkway.

Railroads are known for disasters, however within months of opening, the T&BV freight depot was the site of a tragedy averted. On 22nd August 1907 a mother and young daughter had arrived on the 1:00 P.M. train and was crossing the tracks near the freight depot when a string of freight cars began backing up and was about to crush the young girl. A Western Union operator named C.L. (Charmer Leopold) Cohen saw the girl in peril and leapt in front of her, saving her from certain death, sustaining slight injuries to himself. Now that the freight depot has become a brewery, please make a toast to Leo!

Another noteworthy event occurred 31st March 1941, when *The Great Hutton Pan-American Trainshow* parked at the freight house, then called the *Rock Island Freight Depot*. Attendees saw shrunken heads, "Jolly Jumbo", at 1,260 lbs. the "World's Largest Pig, and trained fleas performing stunts, trained by The London Flea Circus.



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OLDHAM/WILSON RESIDENCE

910 W MARVIN AVE

AMERICAN FOURSQUARE WITH
CRAFTSMAN INFLUENCES



910 W. Marvin was originally constructed for \$1,800 beginning 1908 for Waxahachie native Frank Oldham, son of Edwin Oldham, proprietor of the Oldham Hardware Co. The home underwent a substantial makeover with Craftsman style influences about 1916. Frank sold the home to Cary & Ella Belle (Kinsey) Wilson after being lured to Dallas to work for an oil company. Wilson was also born in Ellis County, and by the time he purchased the home had become a “gentlemen farmer”, leasing Ellis County farmland he had acquired over several decades. Cary and Ella Belle hosted numerous functions during their lifetime at the residence, particularly for the church organizations they supported. Ella Belle, who survived Cary, lived in the home for approximately 50-years, until her death in 1966.

In an email between Adair Wilson Clark (owner from 1982-1993) and John Hamilton (owner from 1999-2020), Adair explains how her great aunt & uncle, Cary & Ella Wilson bought the house. At one point, 910 W. Marvin had been a boarding house where Ella and her daughter Agnes had lived so that Agnes could attend school locally. Eventually Cary moved from his farm in Boyce to join them in 1916, at which point they bought the house. Agnes continued to live at 910. W. Marvin after she married her husband, Ernest Thompson. After Ella died in 1966, Agnes and Ernest owned the house until Agnes died in 1982. She left the house to Adair Wilson Clark, who restored it back to its craftsman style in the 80s and hosted the home on the Gingerbread Trail tour in 1983. The house stayed in the Wilson family until Adair sold it in 1993 to Clay and Lisa Hinds.

Current owners Courtney and Trevor Bodine just completed an extensive rehabilitation of the home, moving the primary bedroom suite downstairs and replicating original wood trim throughout. They also enclosed a small portion of the back porch to add a historically sympathetic butlers pantry/mudroom that suits the family’s needs. Careful attention to detail and architectural nuances are featured throughout the home, including the original floor to ceiling kitchen cabinetry.

MAP

MAP

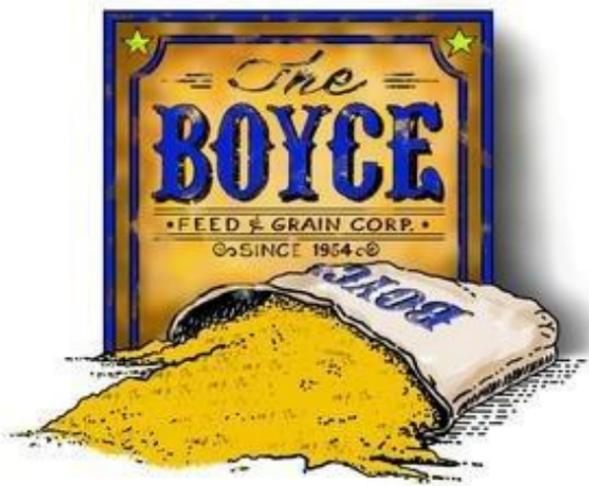
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DR. J.S. BERRY RESIDENCE

201 E UNIVERSITY

COLONIAL REVIVAL



J.S. Berry was born in March 1858 in Missouri but resided in Ellis County before 1860. Their father Rev. Charles Washington Berry had previously come through Texas during the Mexican War. C.W. Berry was an early leader of the Presbyterian Church in Red Oak, which became the largest Presbytery in the state by 1900, and J.S. Berry followed in his father's footsteps as an elder. J.S. Berry attended Louisville Medical College, studying Allopathic medicine, and practiced in Kentucky before moving back to Texas with his practice. He was elected and twice re-elected as county health officer. He was prominent in abating meningitis and smallpox outbreaks from 1907- 1912. He was involved in civic affairs, including infrastructure projects such as paved roads, sidewalks, and connecting sewer lines for sanitary health.

Near the time J.S. Berry died in 1918, the home became occupied by another medical professional, Dr. Clarence Cicero Cook. Rains County native C.C. Cook attended Baylor, then Vanderbilt where he studied dental science. He began practice in Waxahachie no later than 1900. and married Mary Cannon Green in 1906. The couple occupied this home until the 1930's, when they moved to 402 Oldham Ave, which was closer to his downtown practice.

By 1940 the home was acquired by WWI veteran Edward James Anderson, Jr. - son of an Ellis County state representative and a trailblazing mother, Annie M. Payne, who also served in political posts. In 1946 the home was sold to another WWI veteran (chaplain), Rev. Gus Ramage and his wife Olive M. Kelley. While Gus was serving as pastor for the First Christian Church of Waxahachie, a post he held for 30-years until his death in 1969, he also worked in juvenile justice as a probation officer. Gus Ramage was an accomplished ventriloquist, belonging to the International Brotherhood of Magicians and Ventriloquists, which he leveraged in his occupation with Ellis County youth in public schools.

Current owners Jason and Jaclyn Wilson are in keeping with the home's illustrious past. Jason is a veteran, and both he and Jaclyn work in the medical industry just like previous owners. They have carefully stewarded the home, adding thoughtful design touches throughout and recently added a new pool to the property.

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J.W. HARRISON RESIDENCE

717 W MAIN ST
MISSION-STYLE BUNGALOW



This magnificent, mission-style bungalow was built over four years for James Wright Harrison and his English wife Fannie Parton Harrison beginning in 1912. Unique for our area, the house has a basement that goes all the way to bedrock, and the thick plaster walls have survived over 100 years without cracks.

J.W. Harrison's father was a successful cotton merchant from Staffordshire (Manchester), England and his family still owns land around Ellis County today. It is said that J.W. Harrison was at the house every morning during the home's construction and weighed each brick that was used. The interior columns and moldings were imported from England and the house has its original light fixtures, including the original Waterford Chandelier in the dining room.

Similarities between this residence and 716 W Main St are not coincidental, having both been designed by acclaimed architect H.A. Overbeck. J.W.'s wife Fannie is believed to be a cousin, daughter of William Harrison and Catherine Parton of Staffordshire, and the couple wed in Ellis County in 1907. Although they never had children, their bond was deep, and J.W. died 24-hours after Fannie's death 1944.

After raising their own children in the home, current owners Mary and Howard Baskin finished out the 2nd floor attic space and opened the house as a bed and breakfast, The English Merchant's Inn, almost six years ago. Mary has many years of experience in interior design, hospitality, and small group European travel. She has worked for and produced interior design articles for publications as Traditional Home, Country Home, and Better Homes and Gardens. The home is filled with exotic pieces from their travels over the years and functions as both a full-time inn and the Baskin's home. They recently opened The English Merchant's Parlour in historic downtown Waxahachie, a restaurant and wine bar that also hosts curated events with English-style flair.

**50 Year Anniversary - This home was first featured on
Waxahachie's 3rd annual "Gingerbread Trail" in 1971.**



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M. HOWARD GIBSON RESIDENCE

118 OVERHILL DR.

RANCH STYLE



In the 1950's a section of the William Baskins Survey was subdivided by Arthur J. Harris that featured large new residences that were more horizontally architected than Waxahachie homes of the past. Overhill Drive, Greenbrier and Lavista Streets became lined with uniquely American architecture, retrospectively called midcentury design- namely large ranch-style and a few edgier midcentury modern homes. The clean lines and central living spaces of this new style were a huge departure from the busy fretwork ornamentation typical of Waxahachie's historic Victorian homes.

Original resident of 118 Overhill, Marion "Howard" Gibson, was a son and grandson of Ellis County pioneers C.W. & J.C. Gibson. Educated at Texas Christian University, successful in farming and business, elected as president of the Waxahachie Country Club, Howard was nonetheless overshadowed by his trailblazing first wife Margaret Louise (Wright) Gibson. She was a University of Arkansas graduate, teacher, and popular leader in numerous social, public health (Cancer Society), women & girls (Girl Scouts) and a governor appointee as state chairman of The Texas Mother's Committee.

After her college sweetheart Robert T. Austin died in Arkansas, the former Fannie Ruth Thomas came back home to Waxahachie, and married Howard Gibson, whom had been her next-door neighbor on Vickery Street (now East Marvin) when they were young. Like Howard, Fannie Ruth came from a family steeped in Ellis County history, including the Hines family. Howard and Fannie Ruth made a comfortable life at 118 Overhill and entertained frequently. Among the many notable social gatherings at their home was an engagement party for a young law school graduate named Steve Chapman and his future bride Hilda Harbin. Howard and Fannie Ruth remained in their home through the 1960's & 1970's until Fannie Ruth's passing in 1984.

Current owners, Terry & Glenna Reisner, too, have raised their formerly globe-trotting family in this ranch style home. After a 2019 water leak, the Reisner's recently completed an extensive rehabilitation which included matching hardwood floors while saving original 1950's tile in two of the home's three bathrooms.



Home for
the
Holidays





Merry Christmas

JIM PITTS



MORGAN
& BRYAN
PROPERTIES

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*"...And He will be called
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting
Father, Prince of Peace."
-Isaiah 9:6*





The History of the Historic Waxahachie, Inc. Christmas Home Tour

Heritage and history underscore
the very heart of Historic
Waxahachie, Inc.'s mission.

For years, the Christmas season ushered in one of the great home tours our city cherishes- the Candlelight Home Tour. Run by the Downtown Merchant's Association, the Candlelight Home Tour featured extravagant holiday decorating across Waxahachie's homes. In 2018, the cherished Candlelight Home Tour was retired with fond memories by many.

Through Historic Waxahachie's deep community connections, and after many thoughtful conversations, Historic Waxahachie, Inc. agreed to pick up the mantle of this holiday tradition and the first annual Historic Waxahachie Christmas Home Tour was created with great success in 2019! Focusing exclusively on historic homes and showcasing a variety of architectural styles, the Christmas Home Tour is an exciting holiday experience immersing residents and visitors in the magic of living in, and caring for, historic homes.

During 2020, the Christmas Home Tour was reimaged as the Christmas Tour of Lights as a way to celebrate community spirit under the circumstances. We are thrilled to once again bring the classic home tour back to life this year, when more than ever we are reminded that homes truly are the heart of our heritage.

About Historic Waxahachie, Inc.

Founded in 1977, Historic Waxahachie, Inc. works to protect our heritage for past, present, and future generations through preservation, education, and advocacy.

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Join today or learn more at
www.historicwaxahachie.com



HISTORIC
WAXAHACHIE, INC

Christmas Tour of Homes

2021

The homes on this year's tour can be visited from 2-8 pm at your leisure with your ticket. The tour kicks off downtown at the Trinity & Brazos Valley Railway Freight House. From there you may choose the order in which you visit the homes!

TBV Railway Freight House
421 South College St.

Oldham/Wilson Residence
910 W Marvin Ave.

Dr. J.S. Berry Residence
201 E University Ave.

J.W. Harrison Residence
717 W Main St.

M. Howard Gibson Residence
118 Overhill Dr.