

# ***The Pioneer***

ROCKNE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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*By  
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**The Pioneer  
Online**  
*By Webmaster  
Thomas Hilbig*

[sites.rootsweb.com/~txrha](http://sites.rootsweb.com/~txrha)

## **Hilbig Park**

4065 FM 535, Rockne

**Open**

**Saturdays 10-2**

## **Christmas Party**

Phillip Goertz Pioneer Log Cabin

Hilbig Park

**Saturday, Dec. 3rd, 2:00 p.m.**

## **Homecoming Bazaar**

Sacred Heart Church, Rockne, Texas

**Sunday, September 4**

**Hilbig Park open 10 1/2 - 5**

**2006**

## **RHA Annual Meeting**

**Fundraiser**

**Sunday, February 12th**

## **Lehman Cabin**

**Dedication**

Hilbig Park, Rockne, Texas

**Saturday, Oct. 8th, 2:00 p.m.**

## **Unveiling of**

**Knute Rockne Bust**

**Saturday, March 4th**

**Knute's 118th Birthday**

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**"The Lehman Cabin Restoration Is A Work Of Art And Will Be Admired As  
Such For Centuries To Come!!!  
We Can All Be Proud!!!"**

**Quote by Daniel Lehman, Curator for Lehman Cabin**

The dedication of the landmark, which previously stood on the corner of FM 535 and Hwy 20, culminates years of thinking and planning for its restoration. RHA was able to undertake this costly project with the help of a grant from LCRA.

In conjunction with the dedication of the Lehman cabin, the Sons of Confederate Veterans in Austin will conduct a grave marker ceremony for John T. Lehman, who

served in the Civil War. This honor will include re-in-actors in uniform performing a 21 gun salute as well as a cannon salute. **This ceremony will take place in Sacred Heart Cemetery at 12:30 followed by refreshments at the Rockne Museum, Hilbig Park, before the Lehman cabin dedication.**

John T. Lehman donated the land where the present church and cemetery are located. Also, he was the first person to be buried in the Sacred Heart Cemetery.

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**From The Museum Curator's Corner**  
**Minnie L. Bartsch**

I am working on an exhibit of WWII servicemen from Rockne for next year - 60th anniversary of signing of the peace agreement. Fred Goertz is helping by scanning a bunch of photos from a Bastrop County book about servicemen from the county. Not all have their photos in there so I am working on getting photos for all of those named on the service flag (that hung in the church) as well as some others from the community who were not listed on the service flag.

RHA received a donation of \$300.00 toward a memorial for the three from Rockne who gave their lives in WWII. This is a good start toward that memorial and I would like to encourage more donations for this project. Please contact me if you are interested in helping. We will be forming a committee later on.

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**Walnut Creek Church**  
(See it at [sites.rootsweb.com/~txrha/](http://sites.rootsweb.com/~txrha/))

Is this a photo of the old Walnut Creek Catholic Church (located a mile north of the present day church) that was deliberately burned by arsonists? On Feb. 8, 1891, following church services at the Phillip Goertz home, the St. Joseph's Society held a meeting presided over by John M. Goertz, with August Boer as secretary. August Boer writes the following in the minutes. "On the night of January 22, 1891, some atheistic people, who are fanatical and mean, burned down our church, destroying everything that was in it."

The photograph above of an early church was found in Msgr. Leo Goertz' papers so there is a possibility that it was the church at Walnut Creek. RHA would very much like to "verify" this photo as the Walnut Creek Church. If you have any thoughts about the picture, please let us know. Also, please search your old photographs; it is possible that a photo was taken in front of the Walnut Creek Church at one of the weddings listed below:

- Peter Goertz, Sr. and Mary Beck on February 10, 1885
- Will Hilbig and Anna Goertz on Jan 19, 1886
- John M. and Anna Boer Goertz on January 8, 1887
- Michael Goertz and Ottilia Beck on August 6, 1888

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### **In Search of Another Old Photo**

The old Baptismal Font, used in the first Sacred Heart Church and moved to the present church in 1939 was taken out in 1975 when the church was remodeled. This Historic relic dates back to 1892. Sadly, it is now in a state of disrepair but RHA would like to have it restored and a photo would be helpful for details.

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### **Cell Phones and Divine Providence**

The good Lord must be pleased with the work of RHA because he is certainly always there to guide us. A little story to illustrate: The morning of June 7th Charlie and I were waiting for the delivery of the new Hilbig Park sign. Timmy had trenched the hole to specifications  $\frac{1}{2}$  two feet deep, three feet long and four inches wide. The slab comes and plainly I can see that an 8 inch thick slab will not fit in a four inch trench. Timmy just happens by. He calls Marshall Tucker and Landry Tucker off a near-by job. The ground is like clay but didn't deter Marshall. He widens the trench. Next! The boom equipment on the truck wouldn't budge the slab. Marshall calls Timmy. Timmy calls Warren Goertz who just happens to be in the area with his back hoe and comes to the rescue. He lifts the slab very carefully with the front end loader. Marshall and Landry helped guide the 8 ft granite slab as it was eased into place. Timmy Tucker, Bernard Probst, the Tucker boys, and Lester Bartsch have come to the rescue of RHA more than once. Give them a great big "thanks" sometimes. The sign was donated to RHA.

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### **Good Things Just Keep Happening!**

Jerry P. McKenna, a 1962 University of Notre Dame graduate and noted sculptor, will donate a life size bust of Knute Rockne to RHA. His works include a number of sculptures on the Notre Dame campus, including bronze bas-relief sculptures of Notre Dame Football legends George Gipp and Knute Rockne. His work can be found in Germany, Japan and Voss, Norway, where recently he unveiled a statue of Knute Rockne in the coach's birth place. In 1987, McKenna was chosen to create the processional crucifix for the Mass celebrated by Pope John Paul II in San Antonio.

Mr. McKenna lives in Boerne and invited Sisters Kathleen and Mechtilde to attend a function at Notre Dame. He had visited Rockne only once in 1963 and didn't know about RHA's accomplishments and the Rockne Museum. Sister Mechtilde, proudly updated and acquainted him with her hometown. Ii½m sure Sister Mechtilde impressed the renowned sculptor enough to attract his interest. Thank you Sister Mechtilde for putting in a good word for RHA and Rockne.

March 4, 2006, Knute's 118th birthday, is the date for the unveiling of the bust. It will be erected under the mesquite trees in front of the Rockne Museum. In order to make a perfect setting worthy of this generous gift, RHA needs your donations. Can you imagine a setting with a walk around the pedestal and a quiet place to sit and enjoy the pleasant breeze and beautiful landscape while contemplating this man who has inspired old and young alike? If you can't picture this, Ovon Goertz will be happy to show you examples. She and Gerri Martinez, landscape artist, can make this happen only with your interest and donations. **Please help! Send your dollars to RHA for this beautification project.**

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### More Donations

Callahan's General Store donated two showcases for the museum. Gail Wilhelm volunteered her husband Jerry to pick them up and he was happy to help. Leroy Seidel has picked up and carried away four truck loads of mesquite limbs and cacti that Charlie Nelson trimmed. Ii½ve tried to keep up with all the volunteers but that is a big job. Please know that we cannot operate without you. Hopefully, each of you take a lot of pride in being a part of RHA's accomplishments and enjoy the improvements as you pass by Hilbig Park. Danke! Yi½all come!

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### RHA Directors

Marian H. Nelson, President  
Gerri Martinez, Vice-president  
Gloria Hoffman, Secretary  
Minnie L. Bartsch, Treasurer  
Rev. Bernard Goertz, Chaplain  
Bryan Goertz, Attorney  
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Letitia Wilhelm, Docent  
Gayle Wilhelm, Auction

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### **Mission Statement**

The purpose of the **Rockne Historical Association (RHA), a non profit organization**, is to gather, document, develop, encourage, preserve, promote, publish and protect the history of Rockne and the surrounding communities in Bastrop County, Texas.