

Back Roads

Galveston - Texas' Treasure Island



With over 32 miles of beaches Galveston is very much a beach town – but so much more!

Texas has been blessed with many treasures - from abundant oil fields to huge cattle ranches. But one of the best, and most interesting, treasures of Texas is Galveston Island.

Galveston has a long history that includes somewhat of a checkered past. Some of the earliest attempts by westerners to settle the Island were made by brothers Jean and Pierre Lafitte who set up a pirate camp called Campeachy to dispose of contraband and supply the many freebooters in the area. The brothers Lafitte had business interests, and a major influence, from New Orleans to Galveston and throughout the

Gulf of Mexico.

Depending on which source you read the Lafittes were either good guys who helped develop the region or scoundrel pirates who took advantage of every opportunity. In any event they are part of the legends of Galveston.

During the Texas revolution against Mexico the Harbor served as the port for the Texas Navy. Following the war and the decisive victory at San Jacinto a group of investors obtained over 4,500 acres at the harbor to found a town. A year later the Texas legislature granted incorporation to Galveston. The town grew rapidly and many milestones in the development of Texas first appeared in Galveston.

The Island can boast of the first post office, naval base, bakery, newspaper, cotton compress, insurance company, telephone, electric lights, medical college and nursing school.

Galveston for years had the busiest port and was the main hub of railroading in Texas. But the great storm of 1900 devastated Galveston and was such a cataclysmic event that it took many years for Galveston to recover from it.

In the years between WWI and WWII Galveston became a mecca for exploiting prohibition, rumrunners, and illegal gambling. Along with prostitution, which had existed since the Civil War, made the Island the Sin City of the Gulf. The citizens not only tolerated the illegal activities but they took pride in being the "free state of Galveston".

By the mid-fifties state officials were fed up and under the leadership of the Attorney General the cleanup of the Island began. Texas Rangers busted the illicit activity and the character of Galveston began to evolve into a different kind of city.

For much of the 60's and 70's Galveston fell into a state of disrepair, as the Houston Ship Channel diverted much of the shipping to the Port of Houston.

In the early 80's, with much credit to developer George Mitchell, the Island began to reinvent itself. The Strand area was revitalized with many shops and businesses. Instead

Recently the Mayor, Lyda Ann Thomas, gained national fame for her quick and decisive leadership in the face of a possible natural disaster from Hurricane Rita. Mayor Thomas' leadership was especially encouraging in the light of the earlier disaster in New Orleans that exposed incompetence at many levels.

When people think of treasure they usually think of jewels, and Galveston is no different. In these articles you will discover many of Galveston's jewels such as the Grand 1894 Opera House, the Railroad museum, The Elissa, The Balinese Room, Moody Gardens and more.

Visit Texas' Treasure Island, visit Galveston.



Ride The Blue Water Highway

Distance: 80 miles round trip.

Highlights: Parasailers, Outstanding Food, Ocean views, Colorful Sunsets

This run is 40 miles and, for the most part, is alongside the ocean. Actually the ocean is just beyond the sand dunes that block the view for some of the trip. Often the sand is packed so hard that riding on the beach can be a very enjoyable experience – just be aware that salt spray is not a friend of chrome. If you do ride on the beach you will want to stop at the closest car wash and give your bike a thorough cleaning.

Beach houses line the road for the first 18 or 20 miles. In the past few years many new ones have been built and they seem to get more and more elaborate. If you would like to spend some time on the beach there are many beach houses on the West End that are for rent, just call one of

the property management companies.

Don't over eat before you start the Blue Water Hwy ride or you will miss several opportunities for some very memorable dining.

If you are hungry or thirsty this can be a delectable run as there are several good restaurants along the West Beach. Two with the best locations are Richards On The Bay 409-737-5151 located on Burnet Road at the Sea Isle Marina and The Waterman 409-632-0203 located at 14302 Stewart Road in Pirate's Cove. In addition to outstanding food (seafood is particularly outstanding at both) the views overlooking the bay are peacefully serene and the sunsets are the stuff postcards of which are made.

Eleven miles out you will see Galveston Island State Park. The beaches here are some of the best

Travel Arkansas
Scenic Hwy. 23
"The Pig Trail"

•MULBERRY•



•MOUNTAIN•

Lodge & Cabins

Tourist Info

Gift Shop

Special Events

Enjoy this Unforgettable Voyage
 through the Arkansas Ozark
 Mountains, and Unique
 Accommodations for up to 65
 on our Private Mountain
 Top Retreat.



Ozark, Arkansas
 866-667-1919 or 479-667-1919
www.mulberrymountainlodge.com

the material to build Fort. Green. Re-named Fort. Travis, the fort was used in both WWI and WWII to help protect the coastline.

Fort. Travis Park is a good opportunity to be able to get close to the ocean. This is where the Houston Ship Channel meets the Gulf of Mexico so, depending on the currents; you may find the water is not too enticing for swimming. Further up the peninsula the water and the beaches get much better and this area has rapidly grown in popularity (and value) in the last 10 years.

Overall, the Bolivar Peninsula boasts some 40 miles of beaches, although the area after Hwy 124 is best done with a 4-wheel drive vehicle.

Hwy 87 continues along the Bolivar Peninsula for another 21 miles. Seafood is bountiful on the coast and there are many little restaurants in this area that offer outstanding values and delicious food. Somewhere around 10 miles from the ferry you will be at Rollover Yacht Basin and the "cut" that allows bay waters to join the ocean. Businesses in this area have firm parking lots where your bike will be stable while you enjoy food and refreshment. Take a short walk along the beach and you might have good luck looking for shells. Several times in this area we have collected some very interesting ones.

Rollover is the narrowest point along the peninsula – only a few hundred feet wide. In the days of "rum running" the smugglers would bring the barrels to this area and then roll

them across the narrow strip of land to boats waiting on the bayside to receive the contraband - thus the name "rollover".

There was a time some 25 years ago when you could follow 87 all the way to Sabine Pass and into Louisiana. A storm in the early 80's washed

out huge sections of the road and the Texas Department of Transportation, after spending years battling Mother Nature, finally gave up and decided to not reopen the road. A good 4-wheel drive will still allow you to visit the remote beaches in this area to relax, sunbathe, camp, hike, swim or fish.

juju

hangout & bar

winin', dinin' & dancin'

2408 Strand • Galveston Island, Texas
jujuhangout.com (409) 765-9300



yaga

NO BETTAH THREADZ

Timeless era of Beach Clothes & Accessories

2109 Strand • Galveston Island, Texas • yagaclothing.com • (409) 766-1250

towns and the results were some incredible collections of fine Victorian-style homes.

Every year in early December this Victorian flavor is celebrated in the popular Dickens On The Strand event. With participants in period costumes, a chill in the air and chestnuts roasting on an open fire, you will feel like you just stepped into a Charles Dickens novel. Here, among houses and buildings well over 100-years old, visitors catch a glimpse into the rich heritage that is the history of Galveston.

Several of the finest homes built in Victorian Galveston are open to the public;

1895 Moody Mansion
2618 Broadway
409-762-7668

The limestone and brick mansion was built between 1893 and 1895 and designed by William H. Tyndall. The mansion features rare hand-carved wood, stained glass, coffered ceilings, and Moody family heirlooms. The ballroom is decorated as it was when Mary Moody made her social debut on December 12, 1911. *Adults: \$6; Seniors (65+): \$5; Kids(6-18): \$3 ; Under 6: Free*

The Bishop's Palace
1402 Broadway
409-762-2475

This ornate building was begun in 1886 and completed in 1893, at a cost of \$250,000. The building was originally home to the family of Walter Gresham, a former Confederate

colonel and U.S. Congressman. The Catholic diocese owned the structure from the 1920s to middle 1950s. The palace is ranked among the top 100 homes in the nation for its architectural significance, and features woodwork of rosewood, satinwood and white mahogany, and various fireplaces from all over the world.

The mantle in the front ballroom won first prize at the Philadelphia World's Fair in 1876. *Adults \$6; Seniors 65+: \$5; Teens: \$3*

From Ahston Villa and the Moody Mansion to the many private residences this is your opportunity to visit many of these fine homes.

★ WHISKY'S ★

ALL - AMERICAN PUB



Bikers always welcome

Special bike parking on sidewalk

Weekly live entertainment

Visit our website @ www.whiskyspub.com

for updated schedule

2002 POST OFFICE STREET GALVESTON ISLAND, TEXAS
(409) 750-8497 • WWW.WHISKYSPUB.COM



Lone Star Rally

Galveston Island is a fun place to be and for motorcycle enthusiasts it is especially fun the first weekend of November each year when it hosts the Lone Star Motorcycle Rally – a free, 4-day event that runs Thursday through Sunday.

When the first Lone Star Rally was held in Galveston in 2003 the city hoped for an attendance of 20-25,000. Much as happened with Woodstock it was the word-of-mouth this time with cell phones and email and all weekend long they just kept coming...

Total attendance for 2003 exceeded 150,000 and a new major rally was born.

The event has continued to ex-

plode in size each year to the point that the official attendance for the 2006 Rally was 450,000!

From its early days of occupying the Strand Historical district the Rally has increased in size every year and the 2006 rally had almost 400 vendors and exhibitors spread over the three main event areas. In 2006 a segment of Seawall Boulevard was closed to traffic and played host to over 100 major exhibitors and vendors.

Live music seemed to be everywhere as the official rally stages and many local entertainment venues provided free concerts and "no-cover charge" entertainment. Dodge trucks held a drawing for a free Lone Star Edition Dodge Ram Pickup. Budweiser, in cooperation with Stubbs Harley-Davidson and the

Lone Star Rally gave away a custom Harley-Davidson motorcycle.

The Lone Star Rally is a free event. Optional parking passes are available for the weekend for \$10 and provide the most convenient parking access. Passes are not required to attend the event or enjoy any of the activities of the weekend.

If the growth continues as it has for the past 5 years within another two years this event may well be larger than either Sturgis or Daytona.

Plan now to be in Galveston for the 2007 Lone Star Rally November 1-4. More information is available at www.lonestarrally.com

Galveston is a City of legends and The Lone Star Rally is Galveston's Newest Legend.

failed due to the finely choreographed "dash and stash" which employees and gamblers alike took part in once the warning buzzer sounded, they had time to hide everything due to the long distance the Rangers had to travel from the entrance of the Balinese to the casino at the end. One can only imagine the beauty of that intricate ballet being performed. (Or was it more like the Keystone Kops??)

In the late 50's the Balinese was in its heyday, but a new sheriff in town brought about its downfall. Finally wise to the machinations of the legendary establishment, undercover agents were placed in the casino beforehand and the raid at last succeeded. The Balinese as it was then known, closed its doors.

For almost 40 years the structure was battered by hurricanes and suffered from neglect.

That was until 2002 when a new owner, Scott Arnold, re-opened its doors and began the modern day chapter in the Balinese's biography. The Southeast Asian architectural influence of the original structure is again apparent from one end to the other, both inside and out. What was broken has been repaired, what was dusty has been polished, what was neglected has been restored and what was old is now new again.

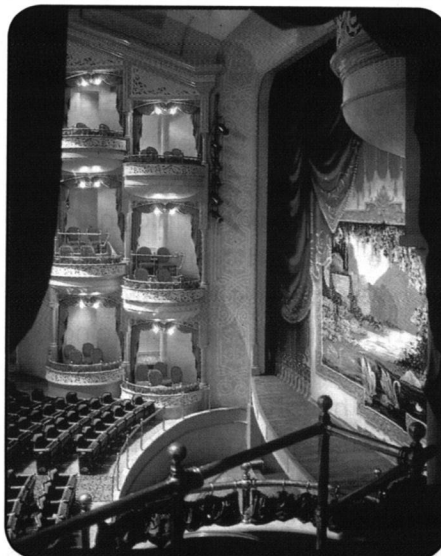
These days you can stop by the Balinese any day during the week and enjoy the company of friendly bartenders and locals. You will enjoy their stories of ghostly encounters in the course of a day's work. The

South Seas Showroom is open Friday and Saturday nights with live music of all genres. The Casino bar, which was the original illegal casino, is also open weekends with a dance club, comedy shows and other special events. While zoot suits and evening gowns are no longer required attire, the charm and elegance of the post-war era is alive and well at the Balinese, and all are welcome to enjoy it. For complete music and event schedules, visit www.Balineseroom.net.

The Grand 1894 Opera House 2020 Postoffice St.

If your yen is to step back in time even further, step into The 1894 Grand Opera House. As the name suggests, The Grand opened its doors originally in 1894, when Galvestonian Henry Greenwall successfully raised the \$100,000 needed for its construction in the heart of downtown Galveston.

The hurricanes of 1900 and 1915 didn't leave a whole lot of Galves-



ton standing. So it is understandable why **The 1894 Grand Opera House** has a particular soft spot in the hearts of the Galveston residents. Between the hurricanes followed by years of neglect, in 1974 renovation and restoration to The Grand brought it back to stand proud once again on Post Office Street as a beacon of the commitment and vision the people of Galveston have for their beloved island.

If the original interior of The Grand mirrored its present day, completely restored splendor, then it was certainly a sight to behold. As you enter the performance hall, you can almost hear the rustle of petticoats and smell the cigar smoke wafting through the air as theatre patrons found their velvet covered seats beneath the light of twinkling chandeliers.

The more fortunate of those would be making their way to the rotund balconies which frame the stage on either side from floor to ceiling. Rather than the rows of seats on the orchestra level, you can imagine a wood dance floor down front, with dinner (or poker?) tables encircling its outer edges.

Who was here and whom did they come to see? Was it a crowd of sophisticated local entrepreneurs and their privileged wives come to enjoy an evening of opera from a European touring company? Or was a crowd of rowdy, raunchy cowboys, frontiersmen and privateers out for an evening of bawdy burlesque entertainment? Or was it something in between – farmers, merchants,

and several different forms of chamber recitals as well. Don't deprive yourself – there's something for everyone! For The Grand's complete calendar and ticket information, visit www.thegrand.com or call 800-821-1894.

Whisky's All American Pub
2002 Post Office St.

When you exit The Grand, take a left, proceed to the end of the block and turn left again into the front door of Whisky's All American Pub. Welcome back to the 21st century, albeit with an old-time southern flair, and a night of good old American fun.

Whisky's Pub is all that its name implies: a pub atmosphere where drinks and live music are served up with southern hospitality and neighborly flair. The Pub's décor will put you in a N'Awlins state of mind with its exposed brick walls, sconce and chandelier lighting, and hardwood floors. Modern touches like cozy booths large enough for the whole group, mosaic tiled table-tops, and loud laughter from the locals will remind you, however, that you are in the here and now, and right at home.

In Whisky's you will get a real taste of life on "island time" complete with laid-back socializing set to the best live American rock and roll to be found for miles around. You will find live music at Whisky's most every weekend night. Some of the artists who have graced Whisky's inviting stage in the past include Los Lonely Boys, Omar & The Howlers, Bleu Edmondson, Jason Boland, Chris



Duarte, Mickey & The Motorcars, The Sixgun Republic, Pushmonkey, Speedtrucker, Carolyn Wonderland, and more recently, this issue's featured artist in "Music Notes", Tribal Tongue. You will recognize names among that list who are now nationally famous artists, as well as some of the best talent from around Texas and beyond. When it comes to music at Whisky's, there ain't no messin' around.

Hosts Beau Rawlins and Andrew Vogel, two Galveston businessmen with a love of the island lifestyle and American music. Since Whisky's opened under their purveyance, they have been perfecting the atmosphere, service and entertainment you can take for granted on each visit to the Pub. Their goal has been to make Whisky's a place where entertainers and entertainees alike will want to return to, and they have definitely succeeded. To see who's playing at Whisky's visit www.whiskypub.com.

Chico's Paradise
500 Seawall Blvd.

No island tour of entertainment venues would be complete without a stop at an outdoor, tropical, rooftop bar situated right across the street from the beach. So let's go to Chico's!

Chico's Paradise is probably the newest addition to the Galveston entertainment and nightlife scene. It opened for business in August of 2006, and unlike the other venues featured here, it's a brand-new building situated on the eastern end of the Seawall directly across from Stewart Beach. Striking in its architectural opulence as well as its breathtaking views of the Gulf. Striking also is the eye-catching airplane situated to appear as though it is striking the side of the building in a crash landing.

The fictional marketing story of Chico's inception is thus: "After fly-



ISLAND FUN AWAITS!

Island Fun awaits just minutes away where every day is one to be remembered. Where else can you explore tropical rainforests, journey the oceans of the world, travel to worlds unknown in the IMAX® 3D, 4D or Ridefilm theaters. Then, make the most of it and truly relax overnight at the spectacular Moody Garden Hotel.



For more information, call:
800-582-4673
www.moodygardens.org

AQUARIUM • RAINFOREST • IMAX® 3D THEATER • 4D THEATER • DISCOVERY PYRAMID • RIDEFILM • PALM BEACH • COLONEL PADDLEWHEELER • HOTEL

HAVE SOME FUN ON GALVESTON ISLAND!



Hawthorn's Victorian Resort Offers

- Free Hot Breakfast Daily
- Free Internet Access
- Free Social Hour Each Wednesday Evening
- Spacious one and two bedroom suites with private Gulfview balconies

Two Swimming Pools for Year-Round Fun

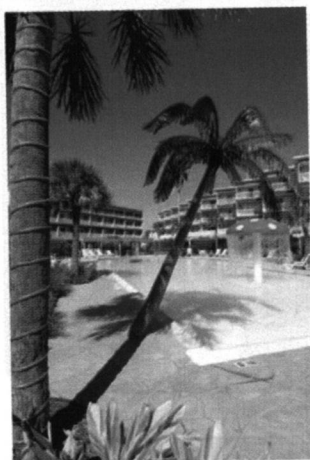
- Paradise Cove pool features a water drop mushroom, a floating alligator, water cannon, and zero depth entry with bubbling jets to tickle your toes.
- Waterfall Lagoon pool has a romantic rock waterfall.

More Resort Amenities

- Fitness Center, Tennis Court, Picnic Pavilion and Game Room

Group Sales & Catering Service

- We offer a wide variety of meeting opportunities for your events.



**From \$89 Sun-Thurs,
Jan & Feb**

Not valid holidays and special events weekends.
Rates subject to availability.

HAWTHORN
SUITES™

at

**The Victorian Resort
& Conference Center**



38

6300 Seawall • Galveston • 800-231-6363
www.hawthorn.com





Planes, Trains and Tall Ships

Continue to enjoy a little nostalgia and a new appreciation out modern conveniences with a visit to the following museums and displays.

The Lone Star Flight Museum

2002 Terminal Dr.

409-740-7722

From the birth aviation on the barren, windswept dunes of North Carolina in 1903 until the present the timeline of aviation is well represented here. You will feel like a kid

again as you stand close to the machines that our fathers and grand fathers flew in two world wars to keep our nation free. An inevitable hush seems to over take visitors as they realize that men fought and died in these machines.

Coupled with the Texas Aviation Hall of Fame a visit to these hangars is an experience you won't soon forget. The museum is home to one of the finest collections of restored aircraft and aviation exhibits in the nation. Over 40 restored aircraft are displayed, many in flying condition.

The LSFM continues to bolster its reputation as one of the top flying museums in the United States. The collection annually logs more than 40,000 cross-country air miles to participate in flying displays and air shows. This unique production takes the living history lesson to the public – in the air – and is seen by over 1.5 million people each year.

WWII Fighters, Bombers, Liaison Trainers, Commercial craft and Executive Planes are among the display. In addition to the planes several vintage automobiles and even an



Indian Motorcycle are on display to add a further dimension of reality.

Open daily (except for special events) from 9 – 5. Admission fees are \$8 for adults, \$5 for seniors and students and children free.

The Railroad Museum
25th and Strand
409-765-5700

The waiting room of the old train station looks much as it did 50 – 75 years ago.

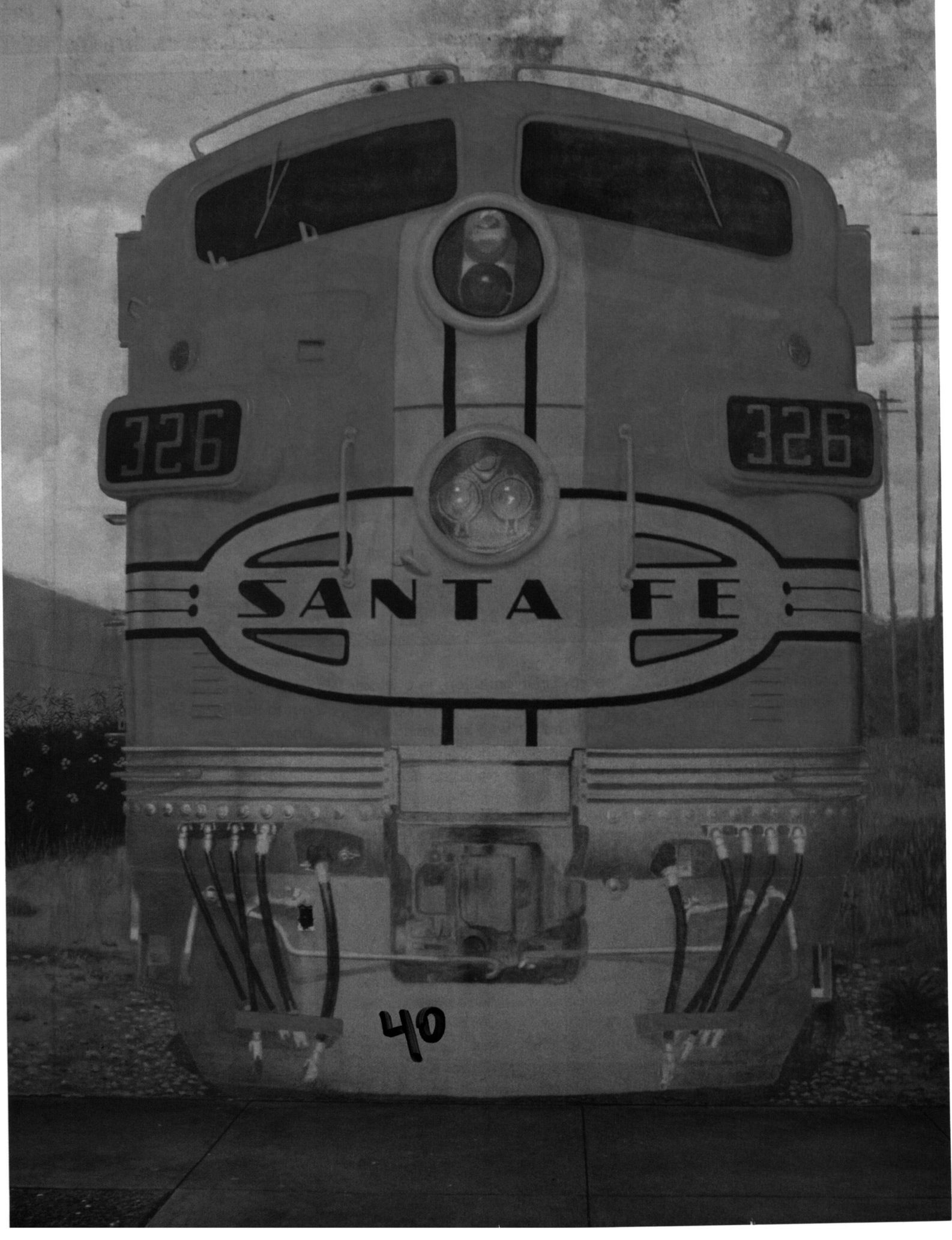
A boy makes faces at his sister. An exhausted worker leans back against one of the wooden benches to rest. Two women wait for their train while

nearby an infant sleeps in a wicker stroller. An old man is saying farewell to his son who is returning to his Naval Base. A photographer grabs a shot with his camera. The conductor asks to see someone's ticket. Business travelers talk. Families sit together sadly waiting the train whistle that will signify separation and loneliness.

All of these stories and more are evident from the white statues seated, leaning and standing in the waiting room of the old train station. These lifelike images are haunting in their realistic poses; their clothing, posture, gestures and expressions seem to tell more than might ever be written about the scene.

Leave the waiting room and go out to the tracks area where steam engines, diesel engines and train cars wait on the tracks for the passengers. Explore the opulent rail cars of the business barons, the Pullman cars for those who could afford first-class travel and the coach cars of the working class.

The entire tableau puts you in a mind of a simpler, less-hurried time. A time when much of a town's stories were played out in the waiting rooms and alongside the tracks of the train stations. Men leaving on business trips, young people on their way to college, service men and women reporting to their duty stations or returning home from war,

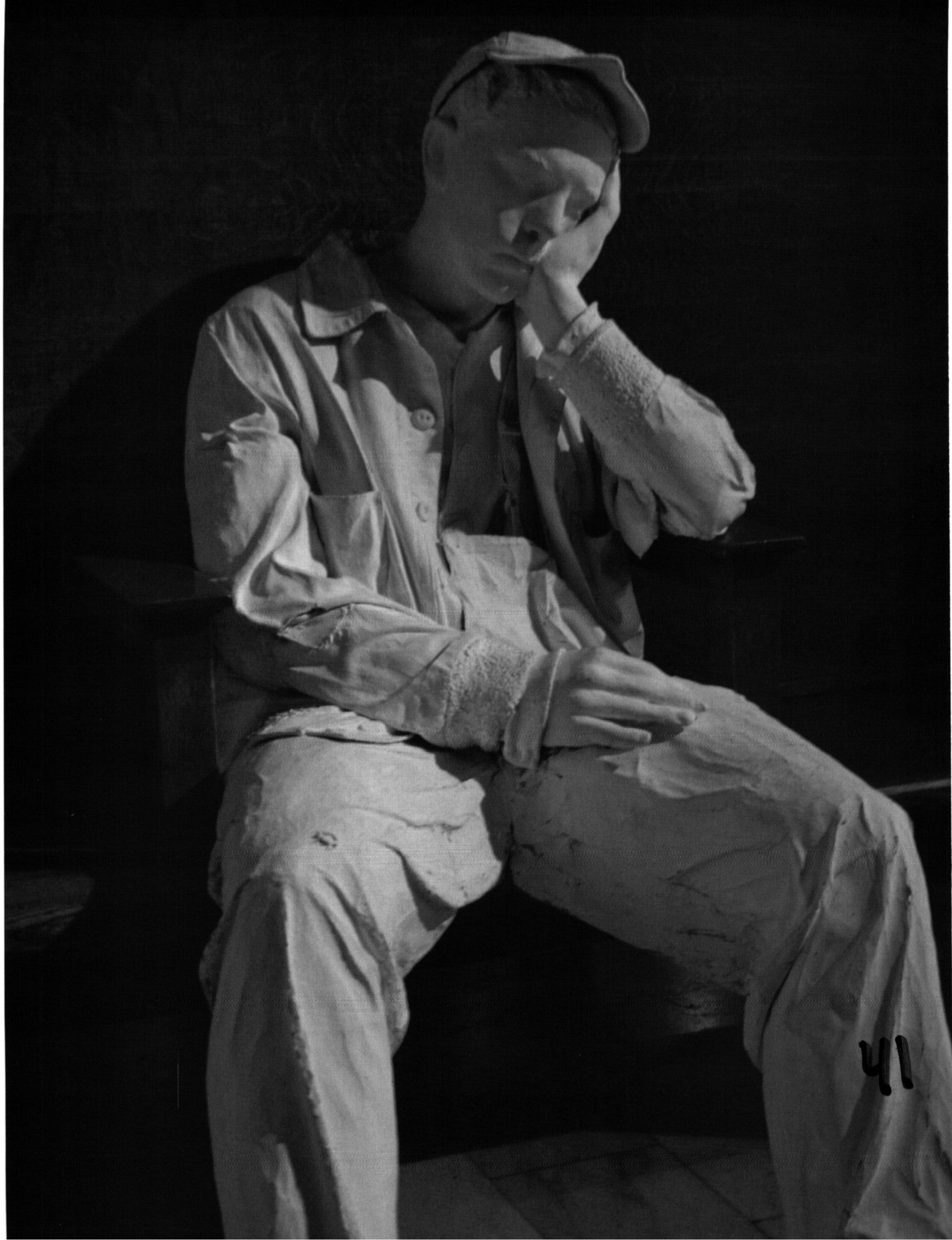


326

326

SANTA FE

40



41





lovers re-united, children going to visit relatives.

The Railroad Museum evokes all of these memories, and more, as you enjoy viewing their collection of railroad equipment and artifacts.

Open daily 10 – 4, admission is \$6, seniors \$5 and children 4 – 12 are \$3.

The Tall Ship Elissa
The Texas Seaport Museum
Pier 21 at Harborside Dr.
409-763-1877

What is ELISSA? ELISSA is a three-masted, iron-hulled sailing ship built in 1877 in Aberdeen, Scotland by Alexander Hall & Company. She carries

nineteen sails covering over one-quarter of an acre in surface area. Tall ships are classified by the configuration of their sailing rig. In ELISSA's case, she is a 'barque' because she carries square and fore-and-aft sails on her fore and mainmasts, but only fore-and-aft sails on her mizzenmast. From her stern to the tip of her jib boom she measures 205 feet. Her height is 99 feet, 9 inches at the main mast and she displaces about 620 tons at her current ballast. But, she is much more than iron, wood and canvas . . .

Unlike some tall ships of today ELISSA is not a replica, but a survivor. She was built during the decline of the "Age of Sail", to fill a niche in

maritime commerce. Over her 90-year commercial history, she carried a variety of cargos to ports around the world, for a succession of owners. Her working life as a freighter came to an end in Piraeus Harbor, Greece, where she was rescued from the salvage yard by a variety of ship preservationists who refused to let her die. The story of ELISSA's discovery and restoration is nothing short of miraculous, and is beautifully retold in photographs and two video presentations at the Texas Seaport Museum.

Today ELISSA is much more than an artifact from a bygone era. She is a fully functional vessel that continues to sail annually during sea tri-



44



als in the Gulf of Mexico. Thanks to Galveston Historical Foundation and its commitment to bring history to life, combined with the dedication of hundreds of volunteers who keep her seaworthy and train each year to sail her, ELISSA and the art of 19th Century square-rigged sailing are alive and well.

The Elissa and the Seaport Museum are open daily 10 – 5. Admission is \$8 adults, \$6 students and a family package (2 adults, 3 kids) for \$22.50.

**Offshore Energy Center's Ocean
Star Museum
Pier 19,
409-766-STAR**

Just off the Strand area, near the Elissa, the Offshore Energy Center (OEC) operates its state-of-the-art facility, the Ocean Star.

Visitors step on board, tour the completely refurbished jack up drilling rig, absorb the day-to-day excitement of offshore drilling and

production, marine transportation, environmental protection, construction, pipelining - all experienced through three decks of videos, equipment exhibits and interactive displays. It's like a museum, educational attraction and working drilling rig all rolled into one.

Daily 10 – 5 winter, and 10 – 6 summer. Admission is \$6 adults, \$5 seniors and \$4 students.

