

The King William Fair Remembers *Neighborhood Heroes*

When you stroll through our neighborhood on Fair Day, have you ever wondered about the names given to certain Fair sites – “Pat’s Pub,” “Julia’s Veranda,” “Ilse’s Attic”? Old timers will recognize those names, but if you’re a newcomer, you might be curious.

Over the years, the various Fair committees have chosen to recognize a few ‘gone but not forgotten’ King William residents who have left an indelible imprint on our neighborhood. It’s yet another way to honor those who have gone before us and to keep their memories alive.

Pat's Pub

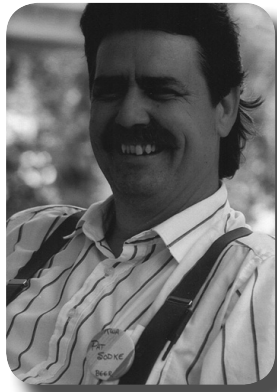
One of these luminaries is **Pat Sodke**, the namesake of “Pat’s Pub.” (Pat’s Pub is being relocated this year from the 300 block of Madison to the 100 block of Johnson, in front of the river foot bridge.) Not only was Pat an all-around terrific guy but he was the Fair’s beer chair for about five years and

before that he was co-chair with Frank Emmett. Sadly, he died unexpectedly in 1995 at the young age of forty-four.

Pat’s connection to the neighborhood goes back to the 1970s when he bought and restored a house at the end of Crofton Street. After selling that house and living in and out of the neighborhood for several years, he and Lou Terwey bought the triplex at 311 Mission Street in 1990.

One of his favorite hobbies was playing darts. Chris Madrid’s was one of the

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Pat Sodke of Pat's Pub

first teams he played on. Lou says that the last game he played was the night before he died.

Pat spent several years in the Air Force as a medical technician. After the Air Force, he went into building construction. “He was a firm believer of salvaging building materials and loved the solid construction of older homes,” says Lou. “If not for him, I wouldn’t know the difference between a kerf and a plinth!”

“When Pat went into the construction business,” says Lou, “he had his own crew and took on big restoration jobs. He must have worked on at least forty houses in our area. Later, he decided to scale down his business and handle smaller jobs where he could do much of the work himself.” When Pat had his fatal heart attack, he had his saw in his hand, doing the work that he loved.

Perhaps it was his sense of humor, his enthusiasm and unconditional acceptance of people, no matter who they were, that endeared him to his many friends.

Julia's Veranda

If you’ve stopped to have a beer and to relax during the fair at “Julia’s Veranda,” you should know that it honors **Julia Cauthorn**, often referred to as “The Duchess of King William.” Julia, who writer Mimi Swartz said looked a little like Gloria Swanson crossed with a pioneer woman, is said to have sold old jewelry and gold coins to buy her house in 1973. It’s the gothic revival, Alfred Giles-designed cottage, known as the Sartor House at 217 King William. Julia died in 2000 at age eighty-two. She was a passionate supporter of the local performing

arts and on many Sunday afternoons would host musicales in her home to showcase an up-and-coming singer, performance group, musician or dancer that had recently caught her fancy. She would set up chairs in her parlor and invite the neighbors in for the performance and serve cake and punch afterwards on her veranda.

Although she was an ardent preservationist and worked tirelessly to restore and preserve the homes in King William, she was often at odds with Walter Mathis. Julia’s approach to restoration was somewhat pragmatic and open-minded whereas Walter was a stickler for authenticity. These differences came to a head in “the battle of the bay window.”

Julia wanted to add a third bay to her cottage on King William on the scale of an 1882 original and a second added in the 1920’s. Walter used his considerable influence to convince the Historic Review Board that the proposed window was “inappropriate” since it wouldn’t look like the existing two – which of course, didn’t look like each other in the first place. To this day, the cottage still has only two bay windows.

Julia, a beloved art patron, had a particular affinity for classical dance. Her spirit lives on through a scholarship program bearing her name at the San Antonio Dance Umbrella.

Ilse's Attic

Many of you have browsed through the commemorative pins, T-shirts and fiesta collectables under the tent in the King William Park on Fair Day. (Ilse’s Attic is being relocating this year to Queen’s Alley, between the Masonic Lodge and St. Joe’s on Washington St.) This is the King William Association store and it’s called “Ilse’s Attic” in honor of **Ilse Griffith**, who lived at 422 East Guenther from 1973 until she died in 1999 at age ninety-nine. During those years, she took her turn as KWA board president (1974-1976) and served as KW Fair Chair when she was seventy-five. (She’s thought



Julia Cauthorn of
Julia's Veranda.
Photo by Michael Nye

*Ilse . . . graduated from
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school's very first
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Ilse Griffith of Ilse's Attic
Photo by Michael Nye

to be the first Fair Chair to serve for two consecutive years – 1973 and 1974). You might have run into Ilse at Bonham Elementary when you went to vote because she served as our

precinct judge for over twenty years until she retired the year before she died.

Ilse attended Bonham Elementary and graduated from Brackenridge High School in 1916 with the school's very first graduating class.

After retiring from her years with Groos Bank, she became active as a volunteer with The San Antonio Conservation Society, San Antonio Herb Society, Institute of Texas Cultures and Texas Folklore Society, to name a few. Her interests were varied and far-flung but history and politics were her two main passions. She could talk endlessly about early Texas politics, especially political scandals such as the election of Lyndon Johnson and the lost ballot box and the Parris of Duvall County.

Her bookcases were crammed with history books and news articles. She held membership in several historical societies. She was also a collector of cook books (although she rarely cooked), old post cards and Mexican folk art collected from the family's many trips to Mexico.

She had a sense of humor until the very end. When Ed Day was called when she fell at her home and had to be taken to Nix Hospital for her final trip (insisting all the while that she didn't need medical attention), her last words to him were, "Ed, thank you for helping a fallen woman."

Bill Cogburn