

The APL

Winter 2019

# Abilene Preservation League

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*Protecting, preserving, and documenting  
the past in Abilene, Texas, since 1977*

*Sweet!*  
Members to meet for a movie and more at the  
Historic Paramount Theatre  
February 12 • 7 PM

## Meet Jim Stuart, Our New Executive Director

Here comes a new year and with it countless opportunities to be good stewards of our historic landscape in Abilene.

Distinctive, historic architecture distinguishes Abilene, while enabling a unique, often more creative and vibrant environment for our city than we might otherwise have.

There's no doubt about it. We have a singular responsibility to do our part to protect our historic legacy.

And because you believe in preservation, you know well that our efforts can truly enrich our common future.

For one, as our country renews its appreciation for small, locally owned businesses, we have a genuine opportunity to be the go-to resource for neighborhood revitalization and for encouraging the growth of new, dynamic, bustling business centers around our historic treasures.

As your new partner in preservation, I am eager to join with our fine board and staff and you in finding new ways to invigorate the League's efforts in advocacy and education. We will energize our communications, improve on our traditions for recognition, enhance the value and benefits of membership, and make the incentives for financial support of APL even more relevant.

Most of all, I'm ready to listen to your ideas and aspirations for a better Abilene Preservation League. And I'm more than ready to enlist your active participation in trading our collective dreams for an exciting reality.

Thank you for trusting me with this responsibility. I'm grateful to have your confidence and support. Best wishes for the New Year.

Now, let's go to work.



## Abilene Preservation League

The Abilene Preservation League is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to providing the leadership, education, and imagination to inspire a community vision of preserving the places and stories of our shared heritage.

### Trustees

James Wagstaff - *President*

Chris Reed - *President-Elect*

Dan Searight - *Vice President*

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Austin Butler

Laura Wardroup

Denise Jones

Andrew Penns

Joann Wilson

### Staff

Jim Stuart - *Executive Director*

Kaylin Roberts - *Administrative Assistant*

Cindy White - *Facilities Coordinator*

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

## Historic District to Expand in Abilene

Recently, Haley Wilcox and Charlotte Adams of Ogee, LLC, an Austin-based historic preservation consulting firm, were thrilled to spend time in Abilene completing an initial survey to serve as a foundation for the expansion of the Abilene Commercial Historic District. Haley and Charlotte surveyed hundreds of buildings and determined what the potential boundaries of an expanded district might look like.

New building types would be included in the expanded district, which is currently limited to late 19th- and early 20th-century commercial buildings. These new types include industrial buildings to the east and south of the existing district, mid-century Modern buildings, such as the Wagstaff Building, and auto-related buildings, such as gas stations and auto repair shops along South 1st.

Ogee looks forward to the next steps in the expansion process and is grateful for the opportunity to work with the Abilene Preservation League!

## Preservation Manual Launch

APL, in conjunction with the City of Abilene and Steve Dieterichs, the Executive Director of the Abilene Chamber Downtown Initiative, will launch the Preservation Manual this year. This comprehensive pamphlet of resources for historic projects will include links to tax resources and recommended companies to tackle different aspects of projects, such as woodworking and plumbing.

# The Difference: The Abilene Preservation League and the Swenson House Historic Society

The Swenson House, a premier Abilene address, now stands on its own, with its own board and development effort.

Since 1977, the Abilene Preservation League has been the voice of historic preservation in Abilene. The League evolved from a growing awareness of the need to preserve the city's built environment, including the beautiful Swenson House.

Other monuments to the work of the APL abound, of course, including The Grace, the Historic Paramount Theatre and so many others.

But the famed Swenson House, built in 1910 by W.G. and Shirley Swenson, was under the custody of APL. As a League property for more than 20 years, the Swenson House has been a prominent, integral social venue of Abilene thanks to contributions from the community and from the Swenson family, and the extensive preservation and care of the house itself.

Common to both the Abilene Preservation League and the Swenson, however, is the vital example of the essential value of historic preservation: Abilene Preservation League is the advocate. The Swenson House is the living, breathing result of that advocacy.



## New Preservation Awards for 2019

Since the Beautiful Home Awards will be going with the Swenson House Historical Society, the board of directors of the APL will be launching a new preservation awards initiative recognizing structures around town in 2019. The name of the awards has yet to be determined, but watch for updates.

# 2018 HSA Luncheon, A Huge Success

Last year's Heritage Stewardship Awards luncheon honored the grassroots efforts of Robert Holladay and the Paramount Theatre. Presiding over the event was none other than Jess Cagle, Abilene Cooper High School graduate and editor for both *People Magazine* and *Entertainment Weekly*. Mr. Holladay entertained the crowd with characteristic wit and charm.

Both Mr. Holladay and the historic Paramount Theatre received a proclamation from the mayor and city acknowledging their steady effort in keeping the theatre in such tip-top condition.

A generous thank-you to all who attended and contributed to the success of this event.



## Abilene Preservation League

1174 N. 1st St.  
Abilene, TX, 79601

### Save the Dates!

**February 12<sup>th</sup>**- Members' Movie  
at the Paramount Theater

**May 4<sup>th</sup>**- Abilene Preservation  
League Annual Gala

**Summer** – Membership event,  
tour of Abilene missile silo and  
picnic

**Fall** – Heritage Stewardship  
Award Luncheon