

Belton Field Trip

July 23, 2010 – 8:00AM

Belton is the county seat of Bell County Texas, with a population of about 15,000. The University of Mary Hardin Baylor is one of its dominant features. It was a center of the cotton industry and quite wealthy in its prime.

We will start our visit at the University and its surroundings. The attached map gives directions. Our objectives at UMHB include using the college as a backdrop for making outdoor portraits* of fellow trippers. The pond has a wide variety of water lilies at its edges (perfect for photography). The campus buildings provide interesting urban landscape opportunities.

We will follow that with photographing Victorian mansions on and around Main Street.

- Some are immediately adjacent to the UMHB campus and are a short walk from the campus.
- Others are further on down Main Street towards the County Courthouse. It is convenient to park in the HEB lot opposite the big Baptist Church at the corner of Main and Sixth. My favorites are reached by going along Sixth away from the Baptist Church one block and turn left on Penelope. The first couple of blocks contain some fine examples.
- On Main there are a couple of blocks on the same side of the street as the Baptist Church in the direction of the courthouse.

I suggest that you pick two areas and concentrate on them.

Next we will go to the courthouse square that is down Main toward the very prominent wedding cake-like building. Here you will want to focus on architectural details of this really special courthouse. The Square and the commercial block on Central Ave leading into the Square hold some treasures.

Lunch is next and it is convenient to suggest a place on the Square. There are two recently-opened establishments that would get a small boost from our business. The Sarsaparilla Saloon and Café on Central in front of the courthouse is a simple lunch eatery with sandwiches, chili, salads and one lunch special (meatloaf on Fridays). The Bodega Coffee Shop is on the opposite side of the courthouse, with a comfortable ambience, sandwiches, desserts and drinks of various kinds. Both have been tried by our gourmet staff and found to be acceptable.

After Lunch we will visit the Bell County Museum on Main Street between 1st and 2nd (parking at the 2nd Ave end). It is a small place with a few interesting displays. There is a collection of models of some of the Victorian houses on the second floor. Photographically creative shots are the order of the day here.

If I have not tired you yet, I have one optional suggestion. A little water park consisting of fanciful sprays is really popular with kid. It is an upscale version of the firemen spraying water from a neighborhood hydrant. It should provide some great pictures. From the Museum take 2nd Avenue, head west, cross the bridge, turn right on N. Alexander, and proceed until you get to the Harris Community Center. The Spray area is on your right. Sprayed Kids is your objective.

* Underlined words are your areas of focus (Six with one optional). I really want good portraits.

Review: July 29 7PM. Bring a thumb drive with a max of 15 pictures with at least one in each category Put your name as the title of the file in which you store them and on the thumb drive. Print up 3 -8x10s of your favorites. These deserve matting and back, but at least back them. No backing – no display!