

**COLLEGEPORT DAY
SATURDAY, MAY 30, 2026
MOPAC HOUSE
15274 FM 1095, Collegeport, Texas
BBQ Dinner Served at 12:00 Noon
PLEASE BRING SIDE DISHES OR DESSERTS.**

**Please direct donations to:
Mopac House Foundation
P. O. Box 175
Collegeport, TX 77428
Or make a contribution as you register at the front door.**

**Invite family and friends to celebrate Collegeport's 118th Year
Remaining barbecue will be sold at the pit after dinner.**

**THANKS TO ALL WHO MAKE OUR HOMECOMING A SUCCESS!
We Look Forward to Seeing You!**

In Memoriam

Lee Ann Munn Bowers

Rachel Ann Rusk Burns

Elmo Duke, Jr.

Tommy Dean Ellis

Alma Joann "Susie" Glasscock

Margaret Keszler Linton

Laura Jean Rush McKissick

Jerry Wayne Slone

*Obituaries for our folk may be read at: https://usgenwebsites.org/TXMatagorda/collegeport/collegeport_day_2026.htm
Notify us of omissions, as we want to remember friends who passed away since our last gathering.

Use the following link to read more about Collegeport:

<http://www.usgenwebsites.org/TXMatagorda/collegeport/collegeport.htm>

Collegeport Day is a long-standing tradition in our community. It is an opportunity for former and current residents and friends of the community to gather in fellowship to enjoy a meal, to rekindle friendships and to forge new ones.

Thank you to all who plan, work, attend and donate to make this annual homecoming a success.
Your support is greatly appreciated.

Origin of Collegeport Day--The Town of Collegeport was established on May 25, 1908. May 25, 1909 brought the grand opening of the town, and each year since, residents and friends have gathered to celebrate this anniversary.



Collegeport Day--1910



Collegeport Pavilion



Hotel Collegeport

The first get-together was held under a tent, with other settings being the Hotel Collegeport, the Collegeport Pavilion on the Tres-Palacios Bay, and finally the Mopac House Community Center. The Mopac House was constructed of materials salvaged from the decommissioned St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico railway station and connected to the Collegeport Public Library. The Mopac House opened on May 4, 1935, and later that month Collegeport Day was observed here with an attendance of about 200 persons. Collegeport Day homecomings have been held here since that time, and are now observed each year on the **LAST SATURDAY** of May.



Mopac House—May 31, 2025

Early homecomings featured basket picnics and covered dish meals at the various locations. Collegeport Day activities have included dances, skating parties, band concerts, baseball games, horseshoes and horseracing. Some may remember playing hopscotch on the sidewalk, Red Rover, and Mother May I in their youth. More recently, a bounce house is an attraction for the youth and the young at heart. The now-traditional barbecued beef dinner began in 1945 after a period of declining attendance during WWII. M. S. "Jack" Holsworth donated the beef that year, and this revitalized the celebration. The community enthusiastically supports the Collegeport Day tradition.

Today, our gatherings center around the barbecued beef dinner accompanied by sides and desserts brought by guests. Iced tea and tableware are provided. The sale of barbecued beef after dinner is the primary fund raiser to help defray Collegeport Day expenses. Donations help fund insurance, electricity, repairs, and incidental expenses associated with maintaining the Mopac House and grounds for the use and benefit of the Collegeport community.

A heartfelt "Thank You" is extended to each person who gives of time, skills and means to maintain the Mopac House and grounds throughout the year.

Families and individuals wishing to make contributions please send to:

The Mopac House Foundation

P. O. Box 175

Collegeport, TX 77428

Or visit with one of the Mopac House Foundation Trustees about assisting with building improvements:

G. W. Franzen--Chairman
Mark Merck--Manager
Jay Ledwig--Assistant Manager
Carol Sue Gibbs--Secretary
Edwin Holsworth—Treasurer

Recap of Last Year's Building Renovations:

--In advance of the Mopac House's 90th birthday in May 2025, the exterior of the building was renovated. Exterior trim and casings were repaired, broken and missing siding was replaced, window screens were repaired, and all exterior surfaces were primed and painted to complete the project.

--Interior window sills and casings were fabricated and fitted to the window frames. (The original casings and sills were removed when paneling was installed over the original beadboard plank walls in 1963.) New sash cords were installed, which restored the windows to their original function. Full height window screens were made for the south and west-facing windows to replace original half-screens that were not repairable.

--The exterior door near the southwest corner was replaced with a fiberglass door unit.

--The original double front doors, hinges and slide bolts were restored and the threshold was extended. The cost of window restoration is around \$10,000.00. To date, \$6,250.00 has been received through designated memorial gifts and through donations in honor of loved ones.

A Special Thank You to all who have participated in this project.

Additional Maintenance and Repair:

The barbecue pit and shelter were given by John Merck, Jr. in loving memory of his father, John Merck, Sr. and his grandparents, Mr. & Mrs. B. V. Merck in 1978. Over time, the slab had cracked and settled, causing the brickwork to separate. Coastal Bend Foundation Repair of Edna, Texas leveled and stabilized the slab. Ace Masonry of Angleton, Texas re-pointed the brickwork and anchored the access doors after the leveling was complete. Thank you to the volunteers who made essential repairs to the cover structure after the foundation repair was completed.

Total cost of the barbecue repair was \$2,650.00.

Roofing: The present roof on the Mopac House was installed in the spring of 2003.

An inspection in 2025 indicated no issues at that time, but the inspector advised keeping watch on the roof's condition, as a dimensional shingle roof on the Texas Gulf Coast typically lasts between 15 and 25 years, depending on exposure and weather conditions. Cost estimates for re-roofing begin upwards of \$13,000.00.

Through your kindness and generosity, the Mopac House Foundation strives to maintain our community center and grounds for the use and benefit of the residents of Collegeport.

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Dedicated to the Memory of Jeanette Williams Angelo

Who generously shared her memories of Collegeport through her original oil paintings
With the Collegeport Community.

Her final painting was inspired by the 1922 wedding photo of
Hattie & Hugo Kundinger—Collegeport's Most Beloved Couple.

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Betty Jeanette Williams Angelo was born in Bay City, Texas on August 1, 1932 to Charlie Jessie "C. J." Williams and Ruby Mozelle Wells Williams. She passed away August 10, 2024 at the age of 92 years. She was the youngest of her siblings who included Seth, Willard, Earl Lee "Babe," Dorothy "Dot," and Jerry Hubert "Johnnie." Jeanette was known by family and homefolk as "Sisty." She attended elementary school at Collegeport and was a graduate of Palacios High School. Jeanette Williams was named Matagorda County Rice Festival Queen in 1949.



C. J. Williams Family

Back row: Charlie "Papa", Earl Lee "Babe", Seth "Finney" his wife Faye, Dorothy, Willard B. and his wife Ruby Lee Corporon Williams, Mozelle standing in front of men;
Front row: Jeanette "Sisty," Johnnie, holding Jeanice and Pat



Jeanette Williams
Matagorda County Rice Festival Queen
1949

Jeanette married Charles Angelo, Jr. on July 7, 1954. They owned and operated Angelo's Fisherman's Wharf, a popular, upscale restaurant on

South Main St. in Houston. Jeanette often said that when she heard the name Sisty at the restaurant, she knew the patrons were from Collegeport. Sisty is survived by her daughters, Toni and Tina, and a host of family and friends.

Sisty was an animated story teller, who related both touching and humorous memories of growing up in Collegeport. She recalled that in those days, folks walked almost everywhere they went--to school and to the Mowery store which were just two blocks from the Williams home, and to church which was just across the street. She also recalled walking with her mother to fish and crab at the bay, or at the gar hole which was near the Pilkington Slough. Later in life, Jeanette began painting in oils; many of her works were inspired by memories of her youth. She presented a landscape to the First Presbyterian Church of



Miss Hattie at her soda fountain.



Jeanette Angelo (red shirt) with the Hubert family presenting **Mr. Hugo & Miss Hattie** May 26, 2012.

Collegeport in 1976 where her mother, Mozelle was an active member. Sisty shared a variety of paintings with family and friends. In later years her paintings focused on Collegeport themes. On May 30, 2009, **Casita del Mar** [depicting the Theo. Smith, Mowery, Canfield home] and a painting of **Miss Hattie** [Kundinger at her soda fountain] were presented to the community. On May 28, 2011 she gave **The Last Cattle Drive** [of the Huebner Cattle Company,] and **The Gar Hole**, painted from memories of her favorite place to swim in Collegeport as a youth. Also on this day, Sisty presented a portrait of **G. W. Franzen**.

Sisty's last oil painting entitled **Mr. Hugo & Miss Hattie** was painted from Hattie & Hugo Kundinger's wedding photo, and was inspired by her love and admiration for the couple. She brought the incomplete wedding portrait to Collegeport Day on May 26, 2012 and was photographed with members of the Hubert family, who were Hugo Kundinger's kin. The framed wedding portrait will be displayed along with other paintings by Jeanette Angelo at

the Mopac House on Collegeport Day.

Hattie & Hugo Kundinger, the subjects of Jeanette Angelo's last oil painting, met each other in Collegeport, but arrived here by different paths. This exceptional couple is regarded as the matriarch and patriarch of Collegeport. They were the beloved shopkeepers who owned and operated their drug store with its famed soda fountain and ice cream parlor.

Hattie May Haisley was born to Vincent Ridgley "V. R." Haisley and Clara A. Rummel Haisley on October 18, 1884 in Iowa. Hattie's mother died in 1889, and her father remarried to Ida Swezey in 1891 in Kansas. Seeking a more favorable climate due to Mrs. Haisley's health, the family migrated to Texas and settled on their farm just East of Collegeport in 1909. Also in the household were Vera, Haisley, and Luther Mills, cousins of Hattie, who were raised by their uncle, V. R. Haisley. Vera Mills was Collegeport's first school teacher and also taught at Citrus Grove. She married in 1911 and moved to Colorado. Hattie and her family were charter members of the First Church of Collegeport—Federated and later of The First Presbyterian Church of Collegeport. She was an active member of the Collegeport Woman's Club and the King's Daughters organization, where she served as Treasurer. As a girl and throughout her life, Hattie enjoyed sports. She was an avid baseball player in her youth and in later years enjoyed bowling.



V. R. & Sarah Ida Haisley home East of Collegeport.

Hugo A. Kundinger was born on December 2, 1870 in Chicago where his father owned and operated a hotel. Hugo worked as an engraver in 1885, and by 1910 he was managing a restaurant. By 1918, the influenza pandemic spread quickly. Hugo's brother-in-law, George Hubert was a traveling tire salesman based out of Oklahoma, and at one point, he learned that everyone in the home office had died of the influenza. Terrified for the safety of his family, he left the company car, telephoned the home office of its location and resigned. He sent Hugo to find a place to relocate the family. A postcard trail indicates that Hugo traveled across the South, from New Smyrna, Florida to New Mexico. He did not find New Smyrna to be "as it was represented" and moved on. When he arrived at Collegeport in Matagorda County, he proclaimed on a post card to the family that he had found "heaven on earth," and here he stayed until he found the real thing! The Hubert family was in Collegeport by April 1918, where they lived in a tent until they found better accommodations at the Hurd house. By 1920, Hugo had purchased the Hoffman Pharmacy on Central Street. Hugo A. Kundinger and Hattie May Haisley were married in the First Presbyterian Church of Collegeport on December 22, 1922. The Huberts moved to Houston by 1923 where George opened a furniture store.

In 1923, the Turner Rice and Irrigation Company was chartered. It took over the Collegeport Warehouse and Commission Company and built several homes for laborers just southeast of

Collegeport, with intentions of developing rice production on the lands south of Collegeport. This area became known as Turnerville.

The Kundingers moved their drug store from Central Street to Turnerville, near the terminal of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railroad. There, they joined a number of other businesses including a grocery/hardware store, a blacksmith/machine shop, and the rice warehouse.

The Kundingers were active in their church and in the community. As an Elder, Hugo served as Clerk of Session and as Treasurer. He was also a Director of the Collegeport Industrial League, serving as its Treasurer. He served as a Trustee and Treasurer of the Mopac House Foundation, organized in 1935 to manage and maintain the Mopac House for the use and benefit of the community. Hugo painted the "MOPAC HOUSE" sign that welcomed guests to the Mopac House on its opening day in 1935. His sign still hangs over the entrance, though it has been repainted.



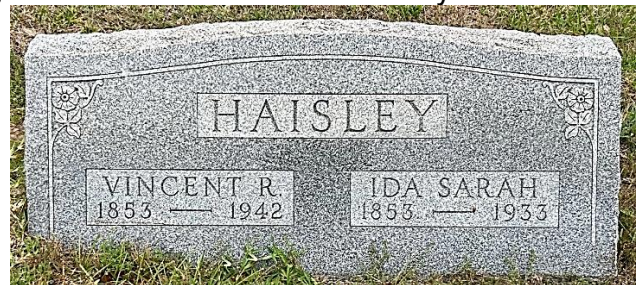
Drug Store at Turnerville (1920's)

The drug store carried groceries, sundries, patent medicines, and medicinal supplies necessary for treating injuries and other maladies. Many in the community turned to "Doc" Kunding for "emergency" care in the absence of a physician. It is said that he refused pay for his services, replying that he was just helping a friend in need. Hattie & Hugo had no children of their own, but they had affection for the children in the community, loving them as their own. The same was true for their nieces and nephews who all felt that same special bond. They remember visiting and leaving with a bag of candy, or as much as they could hold in one hand. Hattie & Hugo's drug store was a favorite gathering place for young and old alike. The Kundingers' homemade ice cream and soda fountain treats satisfied many a sweet tooth. Once, a mother prompted her child to say "thank you" after receiving a treat from Mr. Hugo. He replied, "Don't say THANK YOU—say More!"



Hugo & Hattie Kunding
"Collegeport's Most Beloved Couple"

After Turnerville was abandoned, the drug store remained the social center of the community, housing the post office and the only telephone in Collegeport. Patrons could also buy gasoline. Mr. Hugo passed away in 1952, but Miss Hattie continued to operate the business and serve as postmaster until the building was demolished by Hurricane Carla in September of 1961. Miss Hattie rebuilt a small home on the drug store site where she lived until her death in 1964. Hattie & Hugo Kunding are buried at the Palacios Cemetery near the graves of her father and step-mother, Vincent R. & Ida Sarah Haisley.



*Thank you to the Hubert Family for sharing information and pictures of the Kundingers.

Use this link to read more about the Kunding family.

https://www.usgenwebsites.org/TXMatagorda/family_kunding.htm