

## *Miss Hatties History*

KEN GUNTER, OWNER AND PROPRIETOR OF "MISS HATTIE'S RESTAURANT AND SALOON", WAS BORN AND RAISED IN SAN ANGELO, AND IS WELL KNOWN FOR HIS PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES. IN 1975, WHEN THE BUILDINGS AT 30/32 EAST CONCHO COLLAPSED, KEN BECAME MOTIVATED TO TAKE ACTION AND STARTED THE ORIGINAL PRESERVATION EFFORT ON HISTORIC CONCHO AVENUE. HIS INTEREST WAS TWO FOLD: HIS FAMILY – SINCE 1925 - OWNED AND OPERATED BUSINESSES IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA, AND IN FACT STILL DO TODAY. ALSO, KENNETH'S GRANDFATHER, A.A. GUNTER, IN THE 1930'S OWNED 32 EAST CONCHO, WHICH WAS THEN KNOWN AS THE A.A. GUNTER DOMINO HALL, AND WAS ONE OF THE BUILDINGS TO COLLAPSE. A.A. GUNTER'S WIFE, MYRTLE, A DEVOUT METHODIST, REFUSED TO HAVE SUCH ACTIVITIES AS CARD PLAYING, DOMINOS, AND DRINKING IN HER HOUSE, SO A.A. BOUGHT 32 EAST CONCHO FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF ENJOYING HIS DOMINOS AND CARD PLAYING FRIENDS.

ALTHOUGH KEN COULD NOT SAVE THE BUILDINGS AT 30/32 EAST CONCHO, HE WAS ABLE TO BUY THE REMAINING LOTS AS WELL AS THE ADJACENT BUILDINGS AT 20, 22, 24, 26, AND 28 EAST CONCHO. WITH THIS PURCHASE THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF HISTORIC EAST CONCHO BEGAN. THE PARKING LOT AT HATTIE'S IS TODAY WHAT WAS 28, 30, AND 32 EAST CONCHO. THE A.A. GUNTER DOMINO HALL WOULD HAVE BEEN THE WALL MATE OF WHAT IS NOW SASSY FOX. THE BUILDING WHICH TODAY IS MISS HATTIES WAS ONE OF THE FIRST PERMANENT BUILDINGS IN SAN ANGELO AND WAS BUILT DURING THE ECONOMIC BOOM OF THE 1880'S. THE BUILDING WAS THE ORIGINAL SAN ANGELO NATIONAL BANK BUILDING. THE BUILDING WAS RESTORED AND REGISTERED IN 1981 AND IS THE ONLY LOCAL BUILDING TO BE LISTED ON BOTH THE STATE AND NATIONAL REGISTERS AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK.

KENNETH, BUSY WITH HIS PUBLIC CABLE COMPANIES, LEASED THE BUILDING TO VARIOUS OTHER INDIVIDUALS FROM 1981 TO 1998. IN 1998, AFTER SIX MONTHS OF RENOVATION AND DECORATION, REOPENED THE BUILDING AS "MISS HATTIE'S RESTAURANT AND SALOON."

THE TIN CEILING AND THE BRICK WALLS IN THE MAIN DINING ROOM ARE ORIGINAL. THE ROCK WALLS IN THE BAR AND IN THE ADJACENT ROCK ROOM ARE FROM THE ORIGINAL BUILDINGS AND DATE BACK TO THE 1880'S. THE ROOM, WHICH WE CALL THE SIDE ROOM, IN THE RESTAURANT, WAS BUILT IN 1885 AND WAS RUN AS A GROCERY STORE. THE ORIGINAL BUILDINGS ARE SOME OF THE FEW 1880'S COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES DESIGNED BY OSCAR RUFFINI. THE CAST IRON CORNICE WITH PEDIMENT WAS REPRODUCED IN FIBERGLASS FROM OLD PHOTOGRAPHS.

THE LEGENDARY TUNNEL WHICH WAS REDISCOVERED DURING RENOVATION OF 26 EAST CONCHO CONFIRMS THE OFTEN TOLD STORIES OF RANCHERS AND FARMERS WHO CAME TO TOWN AND TOLD THEIR FAMILIES TO DO THEIR SHOPPING WHILE THEY TENDED TO THEIR BANKING. USING THE TUNNEL THE RANCHERS AND FARMERS WENT UNDERGROUND AND UP TO THE BORDELLO AND SPENT THE DAY DOING THEIR BANKING BUSINESS. WITH DEPOSITS AND WITHDRAWALS COMPLETE, THEY REJOINED THE FAMILY FOR DINNER ON THE TOWN.

THE BUILDING AT 20/22 EAST CONCHO WAS ALSO DESIGNED BY OSCAR RUFFINI, AND WAS BUILT AS A CLOTHING AND DRY GOODS STORE IN 1886. TODAY THAT BUILDING IS J. WILDE'S. SHE PURCHASED THE BUILDING FROM MR. GUNTER IN 2002.

THE BUILDING AT 18/18 1/2 CONCHO AVENUE WAS PURCHASED BY KENNETH IN 1996. AFTER REMODELING THE BUILDING, HE LEASED THE FIRST FLOOR TO LEGEND JEWELERS AND OPENED THE BORDELLO AS A MUSEUM. MARK PRIEST, OWNER OF LEGEND JEWELRY STORE, BOUGHT THE BUILDING IN 2000 AND CONTINUES TO RUN THE BORDELLO MUSEUM AS A TOURIST ATTRACTION.

THANK YOU FOR DINING WITH US AND LETTING US SHARE OUR LOVE OF HISTORY WITH YOU.

KENNETH AND BRENDA GUNTER  
OWNERS