

# Ben Hogan Museum is Dublin's first step in multi-phase project to honor famous golfer

DUBLIN, TX -- The Dublin Historical Society took a giant step towards fulfilling one of its longtime dreams when its board of directors voted recently to create a museum to honor one of its most famous sons.

The Ben Hogan Legacy Museum is expected to open within the next few months as the sole occupant of the society's restored 1880s Lyon-Prim Special Events Center in downtown Dublin.

The creation of the museum is made possible through a working relationship with the Fort Worth-based Ben Hogan Foundation, whose mission is to "honor, celebrate and preserve the legacy and character of Ben Hogan." The Dublin museum will be the first of several local projects that will target that mission.

Considered one of the greatest golfers in history, Ben Hogan was born in Dublin in 1912 and lived here until the age of nine when he and his family moved to Fort Worth. He died in 1997 at the age of 84.

While rooms in several famous golf clubs throughout the golfing world feature Hogan memorabilia, no single museum is dedicated solely to his story. The largest collection of memorabilia, apart from family archives, is located at Fort Worth's Shady Oaks Country Club, Mr. Hogan's home course in his later years.

Robert Stennett, executive director of The Ben Hogan Foundation, based at Shady Oaks, has been instrumental in helping the historical society develop a storyline for the museum. The memorabilia which will be displayed there is through the generosity of the Hogan heirs.

"The historical society's dream for many years has been to develop a museum and other tributes which carry the dignity and respect that Mr. Hogan, the man and the golfer, deserves," said Mary Yantis, president of the historical society. "Through the assistance of Mr. Stennett, the foundation and the Hogan family, we have been able to define that dream and take significant steps towards making it a reality."

The foundation and the historical society share the vision for a world-class museum that preserves the Ben Hogan legacy and defines how his childhood helped mold his character. Dublin's unique claim to fame as Mr. Hogan's childhood home opened the door for that museum to be located here.

Detailed plans for the Hogan projects were revealed at the kickoff event, a \$50-a-plate dinner on Aug. 15 at the Dublin Rotary Building, located directly across Blackjack Street from the Lyon-Prim. Mr. Stennett was guest speaker and entertainment included presentation of a documentary about the famous golfer which featured interviews with family members and fellow golf icons. The dinner event was two days after what would have been Mr. Hogan's 97<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Mr. Hogan is generally considered one of the greatest golfers in the history of the game. He is notable for his profound influence on the golf swing theory and his legendary ball-striking ability.

His life was immortalized in the 1955 movie "Follow the Sun," starring Glenn Ford. Mr. Hogan was severely injured in a 1949 car crash near Van Horn and doctors feared he would never walk again. But he amazed the golf world by returning to tournament golf only 11 months after the accident, taking second place in the 1950 Los Angeles Open after a playoff loss to Sam Snead.

In 1951, Hogan entered just five events, winning three of them (the Masters, the U.S. Open and the World Championship of Golf) and finishing second and fourth in the other two starts.

In 1953, Mr. Hogan was honored with a ticker-tape parade in New York City upon his return from winning the British Open Championship, the only time he played the event. With that victory, he became just the second player, after Gene Sarazen, to win all four of the modern major championships – the Masters, U.S. Open, British Open and PGA Championship. Mr. Hogan is the last golfer to be honored with a New York ticker-tape parade.

Also in 1953, Mr. Hogan founded the Ben Hogan Company to manufacture golf clubs because he was dissatisfied with the clubs he had been using. Since then, the company has been purchased by Callaway Golf.

Before his retirement from golf, he had won 64 PGA tournaments, fourth all-time behind Sam Snead, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods. Out of 292 career tournaments, Mr. Hogan finished in the top three 139 times and in the top ten 241 times.

Karen Wright, executive director of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, said the chamber and Economic Development Corp. are thrilled with the prospect of having another significant tourist draw to the area.

"We are fortunate already to have the world's oldest Dr Pepper bottling plant, which draws upwards of 70,000 visitors to this area each year," she said. "The Ben Hogan Museum will add significantly to those numbers because it has the potential to attract worldwide interest. Even today, Mr. Hogan remains a sports icon in Europe and throughout the United States."

The Dublin Historical Society is developing a plan for relocation of museum artifacts and furnishings which are now displayed in the Lyon-Prim building, used primarily for community meetings and exhibits. The historic building was donated to the society by Grace Prim Lyon, daughter of the founder of the Dublin Dr Pepper Bottling Company, before her death in 1991. The building, which bears a Texas Historical Marker, has housed a number of commercial ventures including a doctor's office, saloon, dress shop and bank.

Work is expected to begin in the next few weeks on the Hogan Legacy Museum, which will be owned by the Dublin Historical Society. The society also owns the Dublin Historical Museum and the Wright Historical Park where the Miller Grist Mill and the Barbee Cabin are located. Recently the society was given the tiny church building on Grafton St. which previously housed St. Mary's Catholic Church. In the past 10 years, more than 1,000 people have joined the society. Volunteers man the historical museum 363 days a year, from 1 to 5 p.m. The Hogan Legacy Museum will also be manned by volunteers.

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