



Twelve junipers to represent the 12 Apostles, line the walkway leading up to the Robertson Plantation home, a rare architectural and historical gem in Salado. (PHOTO BY MARILYN FLEISCHER)



Col. E.S.C. Robertson's plantation desk sits in a bright corner of his study. (PHOTO BY MARILYN FLEISCHER)

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The Civil War.
Emancipation of slaves.
World War I.
The Great Depression.
World War II.
Korean War.
Vietnam War.
Desegregation and the
Civil Rights Movement.
September 11.

The election of Barack
Obama as America's first
president of African-American
heritage.

Through these and many
other historic milestones,
the Robertson Plantation
west of downtown Salado
has stood.

The two-story Greek
Revival mansion built
over a span of almost four
years has seen much of the
shared history of America
and Texas, but she has also
seen the private history of
the Robertson Family over
six generations.

When Col. E.S.C. Robertson
chose the breezy flat
on which he built his large
family home, Salado was

little more than a dotting of
frontier homes, a stagestop
and a post office.

The son of Emperasario
Sterling Robertson, who
was one of the original
Nashville Colony settlers in
Salado, E.S.C. Robertson
would become the founding
father of Salado when
he would donate 100 acres
of his own property to be
sold in plots and the money
used to build Salado College.

The University of Texas
system had not yet been
formed when Salado College
was built on the hill
on which now only ruins
remain. Three fires would
eventually destroy the College
over the years.

The connection between
the Robertson Family and
the founding of Salado is
undeniable.

Now, the Colonel's descendant,
a sixth generation "Sterling,"
wants to reconnect his family's
plantation home with the
community of Salado that
his ancestor founded by
giving the land for Salado
College. 150 years ago.

The frontier college
brought families to Salado
as the community became
known for its excellence.

Sterling Ambrose spoke
April 6 to a group of Salado
citizens about how he wants
to grow the relationship
between the Robertson Ranch
and the community of
Salado and local historians.

Prior to that meeting,
Ambrose sat down on the
back porch of the Robertson
Plantation, a cool breeze
that only seems to happen
in April in Texas and
discussed his hopes and
plans.

"My main goal is that
I want to keep this in the
family, for my own
descendants," he said. His
son, Sterling Ambrose, Jr.,
was riding horseback on
the property.

Later, the Ambroses
welcomed the family of
Baylor coaching legend
Grant Teaff for a private

tour of the home and the
grounds.

The Robertson Plantation
is perhaps the only fully
functioning plantation
property left in Texas
that has been continuously
owned and operated by one
family.

Over the years, since its
beginnings, the family's
history has been maintained
in its home.

Beneath the branches
of an ancient oak tree sits
the family cemetery. Slave
quarters of limestone and
the original stables also
grace the property.

Sterling hopes to share
his family's history and to
open the Plantation home
for use both privately and
publicly in the coming
years.

The first step will be
when the Plantation is
opened for a public tour
during the Salado Founders'
Day Celebration in
October. It has been almost
two decades since the

home was last opened to
the public for a tour.

Other steps will follow.
One thing is certain in the
coming months and years.

As the Robertson Plantation
was once an integral part
of the story of Salado,
it will again become an
integral part in telling the
history of Salado to future
generations.