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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 28, 2006

KERRVILLE— The Texas Heritage Music Foundation is proclaiming the weekend of September 29-30, 2006 as Texas Heritage Living History Weekend on the campus of Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas.

Plans are already under way for the tenth edition of this very unique and hugely popular community education event billed as "Another Way of Learning: Using Stories and Songs."

More than 2000 people are expected for the Friday, September 29, opening event at the Robbins-Lewis Pavilion on Schreiner University campus, featuring more than fifty performers, presenters and educators. A new component of Texas gospel music will be part of the 2006 celebration. Beginning at 9 a.m. and lasting until 3 p.m., the unique and varied line-up will include Old West and Native American demonstrators; Texas history re-enactment groups; chuck wagons and teepees; noted cowboy storytellers and poets; Texas heritage demonstrators and educational exhibits; multiple staging areas for musical performers; horse shoeing demonstrations; the Texas Camel Corp; Native

American education exhibits; and central to the event, a noon tribute to the songs and stories of music legend Jimmie Rodgers, performed by local actor Tony Navarra.

Since 1997 Navarra has shared the stories of Jimmie Rodgers and his association with country music, Texas and specifically, Kerrville, based on Navarra's exhaustive interviews with various Rodgers' family members. Rodgers, hailed as the "Father of Country Music," resided in Kerrville at 617 West Main (Blue Yodeler's Paradise) during the last years of his life and was one of the three original inductees into the Country Music Hall of Fame. He is also a member of the Blues Hall of Fame, the Songwriters Hall of Fame, and of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Texas Heritage Living History Weekend's goal is to teach children from rural *and* inner city schools the rich historical heritage of Texas, its varied peoples and cultures, and its traditions in literature, music and storytelling. It is an especially unique opportunity to expose at-risk youth to the arts, culture, and music of early Texas pioneers, settlers, immigrants and indigenous peoples. It is the foundation's belief that exposure to arts, culture and history will provide youth with opportunities to develop creativity, learn the tools of communication and create multiple solutions to contemporary problems. The event offers a universal language that cuts across disciplines and cultural diversity to bring more coherent meaning to their world. The foundation's goal is to help instill pride and self-assuredness in today's youth, at-risk or otherwise, with a continued education about the diversity of our heritage, culture and people.

Currently, Texas Heritage Living History Weekend is the *only* cultural educational programming of its type in the central Texas/Hill Country area that is (a) *open to the general public (and a destination for Texas tourists)*; (b) *provides funding to schools and agencies for transportation to and from the event*; (c) *places performers and oral historians in schools to give lessons on Texas' diverse culture, heritage and history*; and (d) *charges no admission*. Since 1997, Texas Heritage Living History programming has impacted over 15,000 youths from throughout the Hill Country and central/south Texas.

Each year's lineup of performers is listed on the Texas Heritage Music Foundation's website, www.texasheritagemusic.org. The website also contains downloadable educational materials, including classroom discussion topics and activities, suggested readings and recordings.

Dr. Kathleen Hudson, Executive Director of the Texas Heritage Music Foundation, states, "With a track record of success beginning in 1987, THMF is not interested in just *repeating* a successful event such as Texas Heritage Living History Weekend. We are committed to creative *innovation* and *growth*. Each year, we find new ways to bring stories and songs to the community, to the educational system, and to children and young adults who are deemed 'at-risk'". She goes on to add, "THMF is committed to the belief that telling stories and singing songs do make a difference in the lives of everyone, especially our youth".

Texas Heritage Living History Weekend will continue on Saturday, September 30th with a *Texas Heritage Seminar*, to be held at the Cailloux

Student Activity Center from 1:00-3:00 p.m. A free luncheon is included with an early RSVP. The Texas Folklore Society is hosting the panel.

The Living History Weekend ends with a coffeehouse at the Cailloux Student Activity Center on Saturday night, featuring local musicians.

Thanks to local funding support, the Friday and Saturday events will be free and open to the public.

All schools are invited, and educational packages will be available to teachers. Transportation grants to rural schools and schools with predominantly at-risk enrollments will be available, on a limited basis, upon request.

The event's website is www.texasheritagemusic.org.