

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Members,

May is National Preservation Month.

Preservation Texas has issued their [2019 Most Endangered Places List](#) which includes six listings from across the state. Beaumont's own Pig Stand No. 41 made the list in 2014. Sadly the building no longer stands on Calder Ave., but is commemorated in a mural painted on the side of the new building constructed on the site.



Mural Commemorating Pig Stand No. 41
Photo Credit: Theresa Goodness

Thank you to our members for your time and service.
Theresa Goodness, JCHC Chair

VOLUME 2019, ISSUE 3

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MAY, 2019

Special points of interest:

- * Jefferson County Fast Facts
- * Area Museum Upcoming Events

JEFFERSON COUNTY FAST FACTS

12/22/1936

Date of election to incorporate "University City", a two square mile area bounded by Virginia Avenue, West Port Arthur Rd., KCS Railroad & Sabine East Railroad, inhabited by 900 residents, some of whom petitioned

the Court to hold an election. However, the day before it was scheduled, the petitioners changed their minds. No voters appeared to vote in the election, although the voting equipment and supplies were delivered to the polling location.

4/10/1978

Date Loretta Walker was appointed County Commissioner, Pct. No. 4, to succeed her husband, Ted Walker, who died in office. She was the first female commissioner in Jefferson County history.

HISTORIC TEXAS CEMETERY DESIGNATION TRAINING

The Texas Historical Commission will host a free webinar training on May 23, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. This free webinar will cover the benefits of the Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designation, eligibility requirements, how to complete the request for designation application form, and what to expect during the designation process.

THC Staff encourages you to preview the HTC designation materials, including the Request for Designation form and the Guidelines & Instructions document, prior to attending the webinar, if possible. You can locate those materials on their website at www.thc.texas.gov/htc.

A workshop to view this training will be held in the Jefferson County Historical Commission's conference room on the third floor of the courthouse on May 23, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. The training is open to the public.



Historic Texas Cemetery Designation Seal
Credit: Texas Historical Commission

UPCOMING JCHC MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS IN 2019

Meetings to be held at Jefferson County Courthouse, 1149 Pearl Street, 3rd Floor, Beaumont, TX 77701 in the JCHC Conference Room.

- May 15, 2019
- July 17, 2019
- September 18, 2019
- November 20, 2019

VOLUNTEER HOURS AND MEMBERSHIP

Any work in the preservation or promotion of Jefferson County History may be counted toward your volunteer hours. JCHC meetings and travel time to and from meetings also count as volunteer hours. Members are reminded that at least 50 hours of volunteer work per year is required of each member.

Also with the number of hours, JCHC needs a general description of work performed, for example: 3 Hours – Marker Survey.

If you have any questions, please call the office at 409-835-8701 or contact Linda via email at histcomm@co.jefferson.tx.us

PRESERVATION PARTNERS

- Beaumont Heritage Society
- Beaumont Landmark Commission
- Port Arthur Landmark Commission
- Texas Historical Foundation
- Beaumont Main Street
- Museum of the Gulf Coast

BEAUMONT MAIN STREET'S TOUR OF DOWNTOWN: TEMPLE TO THE BRAVE



Major. Dennis White showing and explaining military artifacts to St. Anne Catholic School students. Photo Credit : Beaumont Main Street

On April 25, 2019, Beaumont Main Street sponsored a tour of downtown Beaumont. Students on a field trip from St. Anne Catholic School visited the Temple to the Brave on their tour of downtown museums.

The Temple to the Brave was built by the Colonel George Moffett Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, as a memorial to those who died in World War I, and the building was dedicated on October 18, 1932.



St. Anne Catholic School students touring the interior of the Temple to the Brave.

Photo Credit: Beaumont Main Street

On the grounds of Pipkin Park, where Temple to the Brave is located, is a historical marker for Jean Baptiste “Jonas” Chaison, an American Revolutionary War soldier, one of only thirty-seven veterans whose graves have been located in Texas.



St. Anne Catholic School students in front of the Temple with US Veterans TC Gibson of the VVA (Vietnam Veterans Association) on right and Ed Touchet of the VFW on the left. Photo Credit: Beaumont Main Street

BEAUMONT HERITAGE SOCIETY EASTER EGG HUNT AT JOHN JAY FRENCH MUSEUM

Beaumont Heritage Society held their fifth annual Easter Egg Hunt at the John Jay French Museum on Saturday, April 20, 2019. The event was well attended by children of all ages, and the weather was beautiful. There were crafts for the kids, lots of eggs to find in the Easter Egg Hunt, and some even had prizes!

The first floor of the French House was open for tours, and many people visited the home and grounds to learn more about our local history.

Beaumont Heritage Society will be hosting on the grounds of the French Museum their annual summer Camp Lookinback for children ages 6 - 11. Check out their [website](#) for more information on fees and camp session dates.



Children waiting at the French Museum for the rope to drop so the Easter Egg Hunt can begin. My grandson, Hudson, photo center, had a great time, and so did his friends.

Photo Credit: Theresa Goodness



The Easter Bunny made an appearance, graciously taking photos with anyone who asked. My grandson, Liam, enjoyed making his acquaintance.

Photo Credit: Theresa Goodness



The Easter Egg Hunt in progress. The grounds were roped off by age group so all the children had a fair chance to find some treasures.

Photo Credit: Theresa Goodness

MYSTERY HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPH



This photograph was provided the Jefferson County Historical Commission by Ronnie Kibodeaux. It is a photograph of the general store in China, Texas, date unknown.

Help solve the mystery...

Can you identify any of the people in the photograph?

**A LETTER FROM MARK WOLFE
REGARDING THE APRIL 13 TORNADO
AT CADDO MOUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE**

ALTO, Texas — The following letter should be attributed to Mark Wolfe, executive director of the Texas Historical Commission, regarding the tornado that devastated the THC's Caddo Mounds State Historic Site on Saturday, April 13, 2019.

Our hearts are broken by the suffering of our friends across Alto, Cherokee County, and elsewhere who were impacted by the terrible storm and tornado over the weekend.

Site staff had only minor injuries. But members of the Caddo Nation and of the Friends of Caddo Mounds were among the many injured and traumatized by this horrific event. It is especially unfair that a day of celebration for the tribe and for other guests from across the region became such a nightmare.

Early Sunday morning, Deputy Executive Director for Historic Sites Joseph Bell, Division Director for Communications Chris Florance, and I traveled to the site to check on agency employees and to offer what assistance we could.

We expected to be horrified by the damage, and we were. What I don't think we expected was the inspiration, compassion, and hope we saw on display from the many people affected by this tragedy.

It was especially gratifying to see the level of response and recovery provided by Cherokee County and their public safety, utility, and charitable partners who mobilized from across the region, including our good friends at Texas Parks and Wildlife. As terrible as these events were, they would have been far worse without the assistance of these dedicated individuals and organizations.

One person lost their life at the site. Their identity has not been released and we are uncertain whether they were attending the event or sought shelter there from the tornado. Regardless of why they were there, it is a terrible loss, and our hearts go out to this individual's loved ones.

Although we see in media accounts that 30-50 individuals required medical attention and that some of these were transported by helicopter to area hospitals, we only know the names of a few of the injured. We hope you understand that we are not permitted to share personal medical information. We respect the privacy of each and every person who was injured and wish them a speedy recovery.

Roughly 50 percent of the visitors center building was demolished by the storm. We are working to obtain a structural assessment of what remains. Fortunately, the exhibit items in the visitors center were replicas—we do not display actual tribal artifacts out of respect for the Caddo people and their beliefs.

CADDO MOUNDS, CONTINUED

The Grass House is gone. Some interpretive signage on the site grounds is intact, but some was lost.

The site's guest house suffered minor damage. Conditions of the utility buildings across the road range from demolished to mostly intact. The demolished structures were primarily garage space for tractors. Those vehicles appeared to be okay, just inaccessible. The site managers' house was slightly damaged.

Our estimate to rebuild the visitors center, to replace vehicles and equipment, and to make other necessary repairs, is \$2.5 million. We're already working on efforts to identify resources to accomplish this goal. We believe that Caddo Mounds State Historic Site will be an important part of the area's recovery.

But for now, we urge those of you reading this to be generous in your support of the Alto community. There are several ways you can help.

BancorpSouth has set up a fund for disaster recovery. You can call 936-858-4416 to donate, or send donations to: BancorpSouth, Alto Relief Fund, P.O. Box 430, Alto, TX 75925. As we learn of other verified donation opportunities to assist the community we will share them with you.

At any point in our time at the site this weekend, we could lift our eyes to the distance and see the Caddo Mounds themselves, seemingly untouched by the storm's devastation. It was an important reminder that we do the work we do with the understanding that our lives are brief, but the places, stories, and cultures that we preserve will outlive us all.

With that in mind, we will rebuild and re-open Caddo Mounds State Historic Site. We don't know how yet, and we will likely need your help to do it—but for now, we will focus on the injured, the traumatized, and those who are grieving.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to us with questions or concerns. We will continue to update you as we receive more confirmed information.



The grass house that previously stood at Caddo Mounds State Historic Site.

Photo Credit: [Texas Historical Commission website](#)

SABINE PASS BATTLEGROUND: HURRICANE HARVEY UPDATE

Hurricane Harvey's largest impact on agency property was to the seawall at Sabine Pass Battleground, reported to be under a foot of storm water during the storm. The site experienced soil erosion and washout adjacent to the seawall. The damage has been assessed and engineering is in progress.

Credit: [Texas Historical Commission Historic Heights: State Historic Site Update 2019](#)



Representation of the USS Clifton at Sabine Pass Battleground
Photo Credit: Theresa Goodness

Celebrate THC State Historic Sites Free Day on May 5!

In celebration of National Preservation Month and Texas Travel and Tourism Week, the THC will offer free admission to state historic sites on Sunday, May 5, 2019.

Credit: [Texas Historical Commission website](#)



Texas Historical markers displayed at Sabine Pass Battleground that commemorate other important moments in the history of Sabine Pass
Photo Credit: Theresa Goodness

AREA MUSEUM UPCOMING EVENTS

Museum of the Gulf Coast May 4 - July 27, 2019

The Museum of the Gulf Coast is proud to announce its 4th Annual Community Art Show, OPEN TO ARTISTS OF ALL AGES.

There will be adult and child Professional and Non-Professional Divisions with prizes and a cash prize for BEST IN SHOW. We will begin accepting entries April 14. The show will open and be judged May 4.

Submissions of 2D or 3D art or photography should feature shipwrecks, sunken cities, and/or sea creatures real or imagined.

Children's activities and live animals will be featured on the opening day.

Credit: [Museum of the Gulf Coast website](#)



Museum of the Gulf Coast

Photo Credit: [museumofthegulfcoast.org](#)

John Jay French Museum

Camp Lookinback July 9, 2019 - July 19, 2019

Camp Lookinback is a fun and educational four-day summer camp held on the grounds of the historic John Jay French museum. Children, ages 6-11, experience another time in Texas history while in a safe and enriching environment. Hands-on activities related to the 1800s will be conducted each day. Camp Lookinback is fun for both boys and girls! Registration is required and space is limited and filled on a first come first serve basis. Cost per child is \$75.00 for Non-Members and \$65.00 for BHS Members.

Credit: [Beaumont Heritage Society website](#)



Photo Credit: [Beaumont Heritage Society website](#)

McFaddin-Ward House Museum

American West: The (True) History of Cowboys

May 9, 2019 @ at 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

We see them in movies and read about them in books, but who were the real cowboys of the American West? For answers, we bring you an expert. Proudly presenting Michael Grauer of the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Please join us for a compelling evening as we learn the true history of cowboys.

Credit: [McFaddin-Ward House Museum website](#)



McFaddin-Ward House Museum

Photo Credit: [McFaddin-Ward House Museum website](#)

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*To preserve and
promote history within
the County.*

We're on the web!
[http://co.jefferson.tx.us/
Historical_Commission/](http://co.jefferson.tx.us/Historical_Commission/)

Jefferson County Historical Commission

Executive Board 2018 - 2019

Chairman, Theresa Goodness

1st Vice-Chairman, Bruce A. Hamilton

2nd Vice-Chairman, Les McMahan

Treasurer, Linda McMahan

Secretary, Jen Trenbeath

JCHC MINI-MUSEUM



Postcard of the 1893 Jefferson County Courthouse

Photo Credit: Steven Lewis

scans of the postcards, printed larger than actual size. Some of the cards have been posted while most have not. The ages of the postcards are from the early 1900s to the mid-1950s. A guide for aging postcards is included.

Postcards of the 1893 and 1931 Jefferson County Courthouse are from the collection of Jefferson County Historical Commission member Steven P. Lewis.

The second exhibit consists of 22 photographs of the exterior of the current courthouse showing architectural details of the art deco building. Most of the photos were taken with a telephoto lens to get a better view of features high above ground level, including eagles, ram's heads, cattle skulls, laughing faces, windows, and friezes. Close-up look of the 1931 Jefferson County Courthouse telephoto photographs are also by Jefferson County Historical Commission member Steven P. Lewis.

Two additional items are an 1899 photograph of the 1893 courthouse and a representation of the current courthouse as a line drawing.

The Jefferson County Historical Commission is proud to announce that a collection of 22 postcards of the 1893 and 1931 Jefferson County Courthouse is on display in the Mini Museum located on the first floor of the courthouse.

Fourteen of the cards are of the 1893 building and eight are of the current structure. The items on display are photographic