

Archeology Committee

July 20, 2023



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

AGENDA ARCHEOLOGY COMMITTEE

Saint George Hall
113 E. El Paso
Marfa, TX 79843
July 21, 2023
8:30 a.m.

This meeting of the Archeology Committee has been properly posted with the Secretary of State's Office according to the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code. The members may discuss and/or take action on any of the items listed in the agenda.

1. **Call to Order** – *Chairman Bruseth*
 - A. Committee Introductions
 - B. Establish a Quorum
 - C. Recognize and/or excuse absences

2. **Consider approval of committee minutes** – *Bruseth*
 - a. Archeology Committee Meeting (April 27, 2023)

3. **Division Director's Report** - *Jones*
 - A. **Update on Archeology Division Programs and staff** - *Jones*
 1. Division Staffing
 2. Director Updates
 3. Texas Archeology Month Update
 4. Texas Archeological Stewardship Network Update
 5. Marine Archeology Program
 6. Curatorial Facilities Certification Program
 - B. **Upcoming activities/events** - *Jones*

4. **Adjournment** – *Bruseth*

NOTICE OF ASSISTANCE AT PUBLIC MEETINGS: Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aids or services such as interpreters for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired, readers, large print or Braille, are requested to contact Paige Neumann at (512) 463-5768 at least four (4) business days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Archeology Committee
Members

4/27/2023

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ARCHEOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

Embassy Suites Austin Central
Agave A-B
5901 N. Interstate Hwy 35
Austin, TX 78723
April 27, 2023
10:00 a.m.

Note: For the full text of action items, please contact the Texas Historical Commission at P.O. Box 12276, Austin TX 78711 or call 512.463-1858.

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Pete Peterson began the Archeology Committee (AC) meeting on April 27, 2023, at 10:100 A.M. Peterson announced that the members would discuss and act on any of the items listed on the agenda. He welcomed everyone to the Archeology Committee meeting and called the roll.

Members Present

Donna Bahorich
Earl Broussard
Tom Perini
Pete Peterson

Members Absent

James Bruseth

A quorum was established. Commissioner Peterson called for a motion to excuse the absence of James Bruseth; Donna Bahorich moved and Tom Perini seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Consider approval of committee minutes

Commissioner Broussard moved to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2022, and the January 31, 2023, Archeology Committee Meetings. Commissioner Bahorich seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Division Director's Report

Archeology Division Director Bradford Jones opened the Division Director's Report announcing the retirement after 34 years of William Martin and the departure of Regional Archeologist Arlo McKee in April. The Archeology Division will be hiring new reviewers and making changes to the organization in the coming months.

Jones reported that he, Amy Borgens, Rebecca Shelton, and Emily Dylla had all attended the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) Meeting in Portland, Oregon, at the end of March and beginning of April. Jones attended the National Association of State Archaeologists Meeting, Borgens

presented research on the Aury Project in Matagorda Bay, Texas, and Rebecca Shelton participated in a symposium highlighting Stewardship Programs. Both Commissioner James Bruseth and AD staff archeologist Emily Dylla were presented with Presidential Recognition Awards meeting; Bruseth for his contributions as an SAA Board Member and Dylla for her role as the meeting's Program Chair. AD staff also attended the Council of Texas Archeologists meeting in April.

Rebecca Shelton, the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network Coordinator, reported on her presentation at the SAA Annual Meeting and introduced the five new Stewards that were elected for 2023. Shelton also previewed the upcoming annual TASN meeting to be held at Fort Concho in San Angelo, Texas.

Amy Borgens, State Marine Archeologist, presented an update on the Marine Archeology Program (MAP). Borgens highlighted the proposed research project focused on identifying any archeological traces of the French pirate Aury's lost fleet of ships that were sunk in 1817 in Matagorda Bay, Texas. The project was approved for a National Park Service Maritime Heritage Grant, but details were still in need of finalization. Additionally, Borgens reported on continued monitoring of the shipwreck that at Boca Chica Beach near the SpaceX launch facility.

Bradford Jones provided a brief update of the Curatorial Facilities Certification Program (CFCP). Working with IT, a new interface for the submission of curation and held-in-trust forms is now part of eTRAC. Jones was approached by Dr. Edward Gonzales-Tenant, anthropology professor at University of Texas, about plans to construct a new archeology laboratory and curatorial space with the intention of becoming a certified state repository.

Finally, Jones noted that multiple staff would be attending the Texas Archeological Society Field School in June. This year's project is the proposed location of a historic Caddo village and the location of Mission Concepcion de los Hainai near Nacogdoches, Texas.

4. Adjournment

Commissioner Peterson adjourned the Archeology Committee meeting at 10:25 A.M.

Quarterly Report

Archeology Division
April–June 2023

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Archeology Division (AD) staff have been busy over the last quarter. With the departure of Bill Martin and Arlo McKee in April, the regional archeology staff are sharing the work to continue providing on-time reviews and permits. In June, Dr. Emily Dylla was promoted to team lead for Review and Compliance, the position vacated by Bill Martin. Dr. Dylla brings broad-based experience and a focus on improving the review process and training of review staff. Interviews are being conducted to identify three new review staff as positions within the division are reorganized. Additionally, AD is delighted to host two Preservation Scholars during summer 2023: Gilbert Martinez and Christine Sanchez.

From June 9–16, several AD staff members took part in the annual Texas Archeological Society (TAS) Field School in Nacogdoches. It was attended by over 340 professional and avocational archeologists from Texas and other states, including Georgia, Missouri, Oklahoma, and California, providing a key opportunity for staff to conduct public outreach. This year's location and arrangements were organized by Tiffany Osburn in her volunteer role as the TAS Field School Committee Chair. Dr. Dylla, Drew Sitters, Bradford Jones, Maggie Moore, and Virginia Moore all participated in the field work, as well as providing afternoon and evening lectures and educational events for students and young professionals. The field school excavations focused on three sites on private land near the town of Douglass that are associated with early 18th-century Caddo homesites and the associated Mission Concepción de los Hainais. The sites were recorded and investigated by Texas Archeological Stewardship Network members Tom Middlebrook, Morris Jackson, Kent Tannery, and Claire Tannery, who played key organizational and public outreach roles before, during, and after the event.

Other staff activities of note:

- April 14—Council of Texas Archeologist Meeting in Austin. Staff presented updates on state programs and participated in a symposium on mentoring students and young professionals. (Bradford Jones, Tiffany Osburn, Virginia Moore, Emily Dylla, Drew Sitters, Rebecca Shelton)
- April 30–May 3—Traveled to El Paso to attend a museum workshop sponsored by the THC, TxDOT, and the Bullock Museum: Consultation and Collaboration with Indigenous Tribes. Also met with staff from the El Paso Museum of Archeology, Centennial Museum at UT-El Paso, Fort Bliss archeologists, and local CHC members (Drew Sitters, Bradford Jones)
- May 4—Traveled to Palo Duro Canyon State Park to attend the same traveling museum workshop: Consultation and Collaboration with Indigenous Tribes. (Bradford Jones, Marie Archambeault)
- May 6—AD Staff hosted the annual Texas Archeological Stewardship Network Meeting at Fort Concho in San Angelo. Over 60 stewards attended, and the site provided excellent facilities for both the meeting and staff housing.
- May 23—Met with new staff of the Archaeological Conservancy to discuss its Texas sites, potential future acquisitions, and grant opportunities (Tiffany Osburn, Rebecca Shelton, Drew Sitters, Emily Dylla, Bradford Jones)
- June 1—National Resource Conservation Service staff visited the THC to introduce new staff and discuss communication on joint jurisdiction projects (Emily Dylla, Bradford Jones)

MARINE ARCHEOLOGY PROGRAM (MAP)

The Marine Archeology Program continued its monitoring of State Antiquities Landmark 41CF125 at Boca Chica Beach in early May. The 19th-century shipwreck became re-exposed in late November 2022 due to a passing storm.

At the time of the trip, the shipwreck was mostly reburied. Aspects of the THC site visit were photographed by *Texas Highways* and it is featured in the July issue of the magazine. As part of the multi-day South Texas trip, the THC assessed visible portions of the early-20th-century Del Mar Resort, the 19th-century port of Brazos Santiago, and Fort Brown of the Mexican-American War, as well as visited the Rabb Plantation at Sabal Palm Sanctuary in Brownsville, the Port Isabel Historical Museum, and the Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History. Additional artifacts from the THC's Port Brazos Santiago collection were loaned to the MAP as part of a student-intern reinventory project; 40 boxes of artifacts (just over half the collection) have been reviewed so far. The THC is coordinating with Port Isabel on opportunities for data-sharing and to assist their efforts to expand the scope of their exhibits.

Preservation Scholar Christine Sanchez began her AD internship in June. She is working on the State Waterway Archeology Mapping Project, which seeks to "rediscover" the states' river crossings, tribal crossings, ferry launches, and forgotten river ports as the basis of a geospatial mapping project. The collated data can help archeologists identify areas that have a high potential to yield such archeological sites, and any associated shipwrecks, so they are better protected in advance of construction and development projects. Sanchez will conduct research using the MAP's library and historic maps, and by utilizing georeferenced historical maps from the Texas Historic Overlay. Sanchez is plotting the locations in a geodatabase using ESRI ArcGIS Pro. Her work will also include coordination with volunteers from the THC's Texas Archeological Stewardship Network and other groups in the submission and compilation of information for the geospatial database.

In April, State Marine Archeologist Amy Borgens presented training on coastal archeological site identification as cross-training for the SCAT Team Member Training workshop organized by the Texas General Land Office and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The training is designed to aid oil spill responders in recognizing archeological sites so they are not accidentally damaged or destroyed during spill mitigation.

REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

Under the auspices of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Antiquities Code of Texas, the State and Federal Review Section staff of the AD reviewed 2,178 proposed development projects from April 1 through June 30. Of those, 72 archeological surveys were required to determine whether any significant cultural resources would be adversely affected, and 42,103.32 acres were surveyed. About 171 historic and prehistoric sites were recorded, and of those, 10 were determined eligible for listing in the National Register, and 116 were determined not eligible, with 45 of undetermined eligibility.

CURATORIAL FACILITIES CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (CFCP)

The THC's CFCP ensures that state-associated archeological collections are properly curated. AD maintains over 300 archeological site collections and is currently managing several research projects. This summer, Gilbert Martinez, a UT-San Antonio student and 2023 Preservation Scholar, is assisting Bradford Jones and other staff with collections-based projects. In particular, he will be finalizing the reinventory of the excavation collections from Old Socorro Mission State Historic Site.

TEXAS ARCHEOLOGY MONTH (TAM)

Each October, the THC celebrates the spirit of discovering Texas' past with archeology-related events across the state. To better coordinate this effort across divisions, a TAM working group was formed that includes staff from AD, HSD, and Communications. This collaborative effort will ensure broad participation by THC's historic sites and other divisions. The TAM Team has already posted the 2023 TAM Event & Activity Form on the TAM website (thc.texas.gov/tam) for events to be submitted and promoted. Based on the tremendous success of the 2022 Pinch Pot Kits, with more than 6,000 distributed, staff have set a goal of 10,000 kits for TAM 2023. The TAM Team has organized weekly Pinch Pot Picnic lunch events for THC staff to help with kit assembly and collaborated with Generation Serve to host assembly sessions for volunteering families, resulting in more than 3,000 produced already as of early June. Working with the Friends of the THC, staff have explored TAM funding sources such as partnering with restaurants to raise funding through promotional sales. We are looking forward to a banner year for TAM 2023.