

Archeology Committee

January 31, 2023



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

AGENDA
ARCHEOLOGY COMMITTEE

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Phoenix Ballroom South
6505 N IH 35
Austin, TX 78752
January 31, 2023
9:00 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. **Approval of Minutes** – *Bruseth*
Archeology Committee Meeting (October 17, 2022)
3. **Division Director's Report** - *Jones*
 - A. Update on Archeology Division Programs and staff - *Jones*
 1. Texas Archeology Month Review - *Moore*
 2. Marine Archeology Program – *Borgens*
 3. Monthly Tribal Coordination Meetings Overview – *Archambeault*
 4. Curatorial Facilities Certification Program - *Jones*
 - B. Upcoming activities/events
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 Esther Brickley 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

4/28/2022

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ARCHEOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

The Stella Hotel
Celeste Ballroom
4100 Lake Atlas Drive
Bryan, TX 77807
October 17, 2022
9:00 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 opened the Archeology Committee (AC) meeting on October 17, 2022, at 9:00 A.M. He 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

Pete Peterson
Donna Bahorich
Tom Perini

Members Absent

Jim Bruseth
Earl Broussard

Commissioner Peterson announced that Commissioners Jim Bruseth and Earl Broussard were absent. He called for a motion to excuse the absence.

Commissioner Peterson heard no objection, a quorum was established, and the meeting was opened.

2. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Peterson asked if changes or corrections were needed for the July 25th, 2022, AC minutes, and hearing none, called for a motion to approve. Commissioner Donna Bahorich seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

3. Division Report

Commissioner Peterson called on Brad Jones to present his division report.

Jones opened by showcasing a permitted archeological project taking place behind the THC offices in Austin. He presented an introduction to the seven fall semester interns and stated the importance of their assistance but also of this opportunity for their professional development.

Jones updated the AC on the Battle of Medina project. He stated that the project was currently conducting fieldwork and that the pieces of the project were coming together. He anticipates Brandon Seale will present an update to the committee in 2023.

Jones recognized that October is Texas Archeology Month (TAM). He highlighted the over 6,000 “Pinch Pot Kits” that were distributed and provided a brief overview of the management, events, products, and volunteers involved with the project. He also previewed the Spanish-language version of the 1554 shipwrecks TAM poster.

Jones provided an update from the Marine Archeology program focused on THC’s application for the “National Maritime Heritage Grant Program Application”. The grant is a collaboration between the Archeology and Architecture Divisions and the Friends of the THC. If successful the grant would fund a granting program for maritime resources in the state, but that part of the grant program would involve a “project” for the identification of the French privateer Aury’s 1817 settlements in Matagorda Bay. A combined marine and terrestrial survey, it would explore his shipwrecks, settlements on land, and the impact of coastal change on site preservation.

Jones shared an update on the recent publication of the Texas Archeological Stewards Network (TASN) newsletter and drew attention to upcoming events – particularly the TAS Annual Meeting in Tyler - where staff would be presenting on THC programs.

Jones concluded his presentation.

Item 4. Adjournment

Commissioner Peterson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Bahorich seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Quarterly Report

Archeology Division
October–December 2022

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

The past quarter began with the annual October celebration of Texas Archeology Month (TAM), keeping Archeology Division (AD) staff busier than usual with public outreach in addition to their regular review and compliance duties. A highlight of TAM is the annual the Texas Archeological Society (TAS) Conference, which took place October 20–22 at The University of Texas at Tyler. AD staff Brad Jones, Tiffany Osburn, Bill Martin, Amy Borgens, and Rebecca Shelton organized a symposium on THC programs, AD staff attended the fall Council of Texas Archeologists (CTA) Meeting, and AD staff held the annual business meeting for members of the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network (TASN). In an initiative to improve opportunities for young professionals and students to learn from established professionals, AD and HSD archeologists Emily Dylla, Virginia Moore, and Sarah Chesney collaborated with other CTA and TAS members to host a table introducing a new volunteer mentorship program.

Unfortunately, October also marked the departure of Antiquities Code specialist Maximilian Hall, who has joined CHD. He was a great colleague and will be missed. Other staff activities of note:

- October 14—Participated in the Doss Center Heritage Pioneer Festival with members of the North Texas Archeological Society (Rebecca Shelton)
- October 28—Attended Texas Historical Foundation tribute to Dr. Michael Collins (Brad Jones)
- October 28—Facilitated Camp Maxey Traditional Cultural Places Survey visit in coordination with Texas Military Department (TMD) (Marie Archambeault)
- October 29—AD and HSD staff and TASN volunteers held the first in-person TAM Fair since the pandemic at the French Legation State Historic Site (Maggie Moore, Virginia Moore, Emily McCuiston, HSD staff Jamie Ross, Sarah Chesney)
- November 1—Attended virtual consultation meeting organized by TMD and Arkansas National Guard (Marie Archambeault)
- November 1–4—Visited two survey projects in El Paso and the THC's Old Socorro Mission State Historic Site (Drew Sitters)
- November 3—Visited the field survey site of American Veterans Archaeological Recovery Battle of Medina Project (Brad Jones)
- November 10—At the invitation of the Bullock Texas State History Museum, presented on *La Belle* and gave a tour of the exhibit for a delegation from Angiers, France and the French General Consul in Texas (Brad Jones)
- November 17—Co-hosted Friends of the THC virtual presentation by Rick Quezada of Ysleta del Sur Pueblo (Marie Archambeault, Brad Jones)
- November 8—AD organized a virtual eTRAC Permit Portal User meeting attended by 64 professional archeologists, who provided feedback on the online permit portal (Laney Fisher, Rebecca Shelton)
- November 18—Attended Alamo Collections Facility preview event (Brad Jones)
- November 29—Conducted annual workshop with U.S. Forest Service in Lufkin (Maggie Moore, Bill Martin)
- November 29–December 1—Hosted an exhibit in collaboration with the CTA's Texas Private Land Heritage Preservation Partnership at the 2022 Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show (Drew Sitters)
- December 7, 14, 21—Visited the Alamo to monitor data recovery excavations in the Plaza and other ongoing regulatory projects (Emily Dylla)
- Dec. 22—Visited the Mitchell Lake project area in Bexar County (Emily Dylla, Virginia Moore)

MARINE ARCHEOLOGY PROGRAM (MAP)

State Marine Archeologist Amy Borgens conducted a site visit of State Antiquities Landmark (SAL) Boca Chica Shipwreck No. 1 (41CF125), at Boca Chica Beach near Brownsville on December 14. Borgens was joined by THC student interns Hunter Johnson and Skylar Melnick, TASN steward Keith Reynolds, local informants, and underwater archeological colleagues from Corpus Christi. The MAP was notified of the site exposure following a norther on November 24, and the shipwreck has been eroding from the beach sediment since that time. The shipwreck was exposed by Hurricane Beulah in 1967 and again by Hurricane Allen in 1980. The MAP visited the site at that time, though it was above the mean high waterline, on private property, in an area that had dunes prior to the cyclone. The shipwreck has been mostly reburied since that time, with brief periods of exposure in 1988, 2017, and 2018. The shipwreck has now eroded into the intertidal area, on state public land. This SAL is less than a mile from the SpaceX Starbase beach facility and is one case study in a chapter by Borgens for the book *The Intertidal Shipwreck: Management of a Historic Resource in an Unmanageable Environment*, completed in December 2022.

MAP student intern Skylar Melnick has made great progress this quarter re-cataloging and assessing 20 of more than 75 boxes of artifacts from Brazos Santiago Depot at Boca Chica Beach near Port Isabel. This early 19th-century Mexican port was later used as a supply depot and military port by the U.S. during the Mexican-American and Civil Wars, and was destroyed by a hurricane in 1867. A famed naval conflict between the Texas Navy vessel *Invincible* and Mexican schooner-of-war *Moctezuma* occurred off the port in 1836. THC staff traveled to the Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History in December with two AD student interns to transfer more artifacts to the THC for this project.

The MAP conducted more than 100 reviews this quarter—the highest number of submissions for this time since FY 2007, continuing an increasing trend in project submittals for marine and riverine projects since FY 2018. Following the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill of FY 1999–2009 and the marked decline in oil exploration in the Gulf of Mexico, marine-based project submissions dropped 33 percent during FY 2010–2018; however, since FY 2019, average underwater reviews exceed those prior to the FY 1999–2009 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill.

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 approximately 2,028 proposed development projects during the period of October 1–December 31. Of those, approximately 84 archeological surveys were required to determine whether any significant cultural resources would be adversely affected, and about 13,006 acres were surveyed. Approximately 180 historic and prehistoric sites were recorded, and of those, 25 were determined eligible for listing in the National Register, while 140 were determined not eligible, with 15 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. In the past quarter, interns Aliyah Anderson (ACC), Samantha Hernandez (Angelo State), Ryann Ramirez (UT-Austin), Jimmy Propper (ACC), Adam Rodriguez (ACC), and TASN stewards Steve Davis and Janet Dye assisted in the ongoing rehabilitation of collections from the Lake Gilmer Project, the Socorro Mission site, the Keeran Site (Fort St. Louis/Presidio La Bahía), and the Morse Mound Site.

TEXAS ARCHEOLOGY MONTH (TAM)

Each year, the THC celebrates the spirit of discovering Texas' past with archeology-related events across the state. We appreciate everyone who made TAM 2022 a great success! There were 52 events on the TAM calendar, both virtual and in-person, held in 34 counties across the state, sponsored by more than 81 partners. The THC partnered with several organizations and volunteers to provide more than 6,000 archeology activity kits to students across Texas, significantly exceeding the initial goal of 5,000. These were distributed to more than 70 individuals and groups, including some THC historic sites. Based on the tremendous success ramping up the THC pinch pot kits, we've set a more ambitious goal of distributing 10,000 kits in 2023. This group effort was made possible by staff from several THC divisions and exemplified the strength of moving toward an interdivision committee model for future TAMs.