

TIME CAPSULE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FORT BEND ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

An affiliate of the Fort Bend History Association

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July 2021



July 20, 2021. 7PM

Speakers: Rob Sawyer

Topic: A Bend in the River: Matagorda County Links to Early Texas History

Early landowners of modern day Spread Oaks Ranch, or the “Bend in the River” as it has also been called, have several links to important events in Texas history. One was Mississippi River boatman Jacob Jennings, who came to Texas in 1821 aboard the *Lively*. Jennings constructed what may have been the first structure in Austin’s Texas. The cabin, built with Texas Revolution figure Phillip Dimmit, was abandoned by 1824. Its location and artifacts have never been found.

Jennings died in 1822, and the next landowner was Hosea H. League. League was a busy man – an empresario of the Leftwich Colony, a founder of Matagorda, and regidor to the San Felipe *Ayuntamiento* in 1829. When Stephen F. Austin called for “every man in Texas” to take up arms and “take to the field at once” as Cos organized his army in 1835, the Volunteers began gathering on his Bend in the River land before they marched to Gonzales. The location where the Volunteers mustered at the beginning of the Revolution has not been located.

There were other colorful characters from the Bend in the River, including John Crier, Thomas Alley, Thomas Cayce, James Denison, D.E.E. Braman, James Royall, Shanghai Pierce, and A.P. Borden. Rob Sawyer is currently chronicling these people and their stories as part of a three-year historical study, and hopes that the work, in the end, provides at least a small contribution to Texas history and highlights the potential for future archeological research in or near the ranch.



Speaker Bio:

R.K. Sawyer, a retired geologist, is currently a wildlife and habitat manager at Spread Oaks Ranch, near Bay City. He has written three books on Texas waterfowling history: *A Hundred Years of Texas Waterfowl Hunting* (2012), *Texas Market Hunting: Stories of Waterfowl, Game Laws, and Outlaws* (2013), and *Images of the Hunt: A Photographic History of Texas Waterfowling* (2020).

Currently, Rob is working on the history of Spread Oaks Ranch for its owners, Forrest and Audrey Wylie.

Location: Gus George Law Enforcement Academy - 1521 Eugene Heimann Circle, Richmond, Texas.

Meeting Minutes from the May Meeting

The Fort Bend Archeological Society met at the Gus George Law Enforcement Academy, Richmond TX. In attendance were 15 members and 6 guests. Jay Roussel, President, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Minutes from April 20, 2021: No objections, minutes stand as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Balance as of May 10, 2021 is \$4,928.29. No objections, Treasurer's Report stands accepted.

Old Business:

- Paul Spana gave an update on the status of the Lamar site excavations.
- Spana reported the Fort Bend Museum has accepted a donation of artifacts from the Bullhead Convict Labor Camp. The artifacts were found before the site was known to be a cemetery. FBAS members worked with museum staff and archeologist Reign Clark to catalog over 400 artifacts. Clark plans to schedule a meeting at Texas A&M to show FBAS members how to conserve and preserve the artifacts for the museum.
- Jay Roussel recognized special guests, Joe and Merle Hudgins who were in attendance at the meeting.

Announcements:

- There will be no meeting in June.
- Roussel announced the speaker for the July program is someone who currently works at the Spread Oaks Ranch. He will speak about a number of sites he has investigated at the ranch and the early settlers of that area.

Presentation:

Vice-President, Rich Murphy introduced speaker Dr. Dan Worrall. His presentations covered elements of the Late Archaic prehistory of the Lower Brazos River valley and the surrounding prairies.

Meeting adjourned 8:30 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Paul Spana

Treasurer's Report

FORT BEND ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY July 13, 2021

Balance as of May 10, 2021				\$4,928.29
Deposit	5/27/2021	Marcel Frey	1/2 membership + 1/2 donation	+ 100.00
1968	5/27/2021	FBHA	membership for Marcel Frey	- 50.00
		Brazosport		
1969	6/11/2021	Museum	in honor of Sandra Pollan	- 200.00
Balance as of July 13, 2021				\$4,778.29

Submitted by Claire Rogers, Treasurer