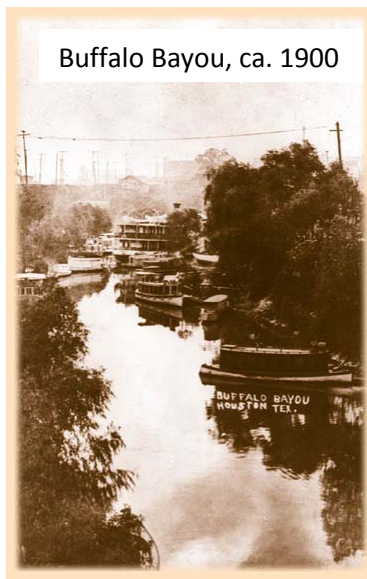




February Meeting: New Developments in Old Frostown, Texas

Our next meeting is at 7:00 pm Thursday, February 17, in room 009 of the Doherty Library at the University of St. Thomas. Our speaker will be Kirk Farris (photo at right), founder and president of Art & Environmental Architecture, Inc. (AEA), a non-profit organization dedicated to revitalizing an historic area of downtown Houston. He will be speaking to us about a little-known area of early Houston called Frostown.

Frostown (Frost-Town), Texas, was named for the Frost family, who arrived in the 1830s. It was located on Buffalo Bayou in Harrisburg (now Harris) County eight miles upstream from Harrisburg and several blocks east of the conjunction of White Oak Bayou and Buffalo Bayou, west of present U.S. Highway 59 near its intersection with I-10. Even



Buffalo Bayou, ca. 1900

earlier, in 1822, the area was settled by the Wilkins family, John Austin, and others. John Austin received a two-league survey in 1824 from the Spanish government under the supervision of Stephen F. Austin. The 1826 census of Austin's colony taken by the Spanish government listed about 20 inhabitants, mainly farmers and stockraisers. Be-

tween the late 1820s and the 1840s, Germans began settling in the area. Frostown grew rapidly with the establishment of several churches, a synagogue, a school, a sawmill, a volunteer fire department, a post office, and many businesses. By early 1854 Frostown was a thriving community, with large

boats coming up the bayou, transporting loads of cotton and logs. The town experienced a decline in the 1880s, however, when the post office was closed. Frostown Cemetery, which was used until



the 1880s, no longer exists; the Harris County tax assessor's Block Book shows that the site has disappeared into the bayou. In the mid-20th century bulldozers demolished the remaining gable-roofed cottages in the community in order to construct the Eastex Freeway section of US Hwy. 59.

During the early part of the 20th century, the identity of Frost Town was finally forgotten as the wheels of industry crisscrossed the area with new rail lines, factories, and warehouses.

According to their web site, the mission of AEA is "to create an abbreviated form of a botanical garden, bringing about a lasting transformation of the McKee Street Bridge, James Bute Park and Frost Town Historic Site as a public sanctuary. This purpose includes conservancy of nature and history, maintenance of garden space, and a focus on educational programs serving to enhance peaceful contemplation and observation of a vibrant urban visitation area."

Kirk Farris is a local artist, musician, and environmentalist.



President's Message

REMINDER: THIS MONTHS MEETING will be Thursday, February 17, 2011; 7:00 P.M. to 9:30 P.M. We will again be meeting at the UST Doherty Library (Bldg. 22); room 009 (Basement).

It was my intent for this month's president's message to continue with the January's Profile discussion on how to access archeological reports and publications from Rice's Fondren Library. However, I am yielding my regular space for this president's message to make room in the Profile for an important article, the timing of which is most critical.

The article herein of which I speak is an open letter to all concerned citizens of Texas who are interested in protecting, promoting and preserving the historical and archeological resources of the state. In addition to being "citizens", we in HAS have a more vested interest in these objectives. Therefore, I yield my space and shall continue the library discussion in a later issue of the Profile. --Charlie Gordy

Minutes of January 20 HAS Meeting, University of St. Thomas

Meeting opened by Charlie Gordy, President. Michael Bailey, Vice President, announced that the Brazoria County Historical Museum is sponsoring a bus tour on Friday, March 4, celebrating the 175th anniversary of the Republic of Texas. Cost is \$35/person.

For the program, Mr. Alston V. Thomas, Department of Anthropology, Laboratory of Ecological Archeology, Texas A&M University, spoke on Hunter-Gather Lifeways on the Coastal Plains of Texas.

Business meeting held immediately after the lecture. Unfinished business: The HAS Facebook page is current; however, the HAS website needs to be updated.

With a quorum of 20, the minutes from last meeting were approved as read. Michael Johnston, Treasurer, presented the HAS financial report for year ending 2010: Beginning balance of \$4,476.90, income \$3,238.50, expenses \$2,914.38, ending balance \$4,801.02. Treasurer's books for year 2010 will be turned over to auditors this month.

The 2011 budget was presented as approved by the Board: projected income \$3500, contingency \$500, projected expenses \$2900. If the Powell Report is ready for print and distribution this year there will be a budget shortfall of \$1900. Beth Aucoin contributed information that the Powell Report was originally approved by the membership as a publication that would be issued free to the membership and offered for sale to non-members. The current plan is for the report to be issued in four parts, with the third part out this year and the fourth part in process. Motion to adopt 2011 budget as presented made by Linda Gorski, seconded by Lucia Bonno, approved by vote of members present.

Sheldon Kendall reported on the Champs d'Asile Project. The Historical Commission investigation of the site estimated the distance from the river is further than originally thought. Volunteers welcome to do detecting on the site before February 14, when the THC will return with GPR equipment.

Linda Swift gave a report on the AIA Conference in San Antonio. HAS was given booth space at the Conference where posters of the Bernardo site were displayed. John Williams reported that a three page report on the Bernardo Project was published in the TAS magazine and he has requested permission from TAS to copy this report for distribution to HAS members.

Motion to adjourn by Muriel Walker, Beth Aucoin seconded. Meeting adjourned.

February Lab Nights

It looks like Mother Nature will cooperate and we'll have good weather on Monday the 14th so we'll have lab at the usual time and place: Room 103, Sewall Hall, Rice University, 7-9 p.m. Next lab will be Feb. 28th.

We'll continue working as we did last time: cataloging and painting sherds from the Cable collection. **Reminder:** A credit card is necessary to access the parking lot near Sewall Hall. For a map, check

www.houstonarcheology.org.

--Beth Aucoin

An open letter to all concerned Citizens of Texas who are interested in Protecting, Promoting and Preserving the Historical and Archeological Resources of our great state.

This week the 82nd Legislature was installed and began the business of creating new law and working to produce a balanced biennial budget. Our Legislators are faced with a massive budget shortfall in available and projected funds with the Comptroller's current estimate figure set at \$27,100,000,000! The new Legislature will be fiscally very conservative and will resist creating new revenue through new taxes in order to balance the budget. Their goal is a balanced budget relying strictly through reducing expenditures via budget cuts.

All state agencies and departments have been instructed to plan deep budget cuts. The THC has been notified that their budget for archeology will be cut by over 50% possibly eliminating regional archeologist positions, the steward's network and Archeology Month. TPWD has been directed to reduce archeological staff by approximately 25%! And more cutting is likely. [All THC programs are now on the chopping block. See note below. –Ed.] It is clear that the drafters of the budget consider archeology to be “dispensable”.

This letter is to notify all interested organizations of the situation. Our goal is to organize and mobilize concerned fellow Texans to “stand guard” and “speak up”. The desired end result of this effort is to prevent the state agencies that serve our historical and archeological interests from taking an inordinately large budget reduction; or at the very least, lessen the impact. We have begun to organize a true grass-roots lobbying effort for the 82nd Legislature and will communicate our point of view on all legislative and budget matters affecting historical, archeological and cultural resources.

Public opinion is the fuel that drives the legislative engine. Our challenge will be to give a voice to our opinion and communicate clearly, directly and effectively to the Legislature on such matters. An organized effort will involve email and letter writing campaigns. The most productive communication will involve personal contact via phone calls and personal meetings with our Legislators. New bills require committee hearings which provide us with a “bully pulpit” from which to voice our opinions and offer “expert testimony”.

This is a strictly volunteer, non-partisan effort. Our interests in history and archeology cut across all party lines. We will deliver our message with laser-beam focus to be most effective and do the following:

We will organize information gathering efforts.

- We will keep everyone informed of what we learn through Social Media and email.
 - We will recommend a clear, concise message to be delivered.
 - We will organize email and letter writing campaigns on the various issues as they arise.
 - We will coordinate phone calling to the Legislators on the issues.
 - We will organize multiple “March on the Capital” efforts to communicate our opinion eyeball-to-eyeball.
- Our organization has been named “***I Support Texas History & Archeology***” or iSTHA for short. We have a website set up for dissemination of information and requests for action. You may find us at www.iSTHA.net. General requests or other contact may be sent to info@iSTHA.net. All Texans who are interested in supporting and participating in this effort should contact me via email at: steve.davis@iSTHA.net. Our motto is “***Preserve, Promote & Protect Texas History & Archeology***”. Thank you very much for your interest and support of this effort as we attempt to influence the outcome of this legislative session.

Steve Davis, *I Support Texas History & Archeology*
eMail: steve.davis@iSTHA.net, phone: 512-413-9073

[Editor's Note: In the two weeks since Steve wrote this open letter, the situation has gotten even worse for Texas archeology. Gov. Perry, in his “State of the State” address, is now calling for a two-year dissolution of the Texas Historical Commission because it is a “non-mission-critical” agency. This would eliminate the agency that (among other things) cares for Texas historical parks and monuments, oversees state-required archeological evaluations prior to construction, provides funds for the restoration of county courthouses, and sponsors the Stewards' Program which helps citizens to identify archeological sites and assists property owners with the protection of sites and artifacts. The Legislature has just established its committees to begin considering the new budget. To find out what you can do, go to www.iSTHA.net. Texas needs to hear your voice!]

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Houston Archeological Society, P. O. Box 130631, Houston, TX 77219-0631

Please complete this form and mail it, with your check for the correct amount, to the above address.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ (home) _____ (work) e-mail: _____

Type of membership: ___ New ___ Renewal Please circle one: Student (\$10/year) Single (\$20/year)
Family (\$25/year) Contributing (\$30+/year)

ALL MEMBERS MUST SIGN THE FOLLOWING PLEDGE: I pledge that I will not intentionally violate the terms and conditions of any present or future federal, state or local statute concerning cultural resources, or engage in the practice of buying or selling artifacts for commercial purposes, or engage in the willful destruction or distortion of archeological data, or disregard proper archeological field techniques.

I DO I DO NOT authorize HAS to invite me by e-mail to join the HAS Facebook page as a "friend".

Signature(s): _____ Date: _____

Please submit articles for publication to *Profile* Editor Linda Swift at swiftlinda@sbcglobal.net.
Submit articles no later than March 7 for the March 2011 issue.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ARCHEOLOGY IN THIS AREA, CONTACT THE FOLLOWING:

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