

JCHC JOURNAL

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION VOLUME 2019, ISSUE 2

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Members,

February is African American History Month and March is Women's History Month. These stories are often under told in our communities, and we must seek out ways to share this history and their important contributions to our county's development. Some examples in our history of leaders who contributed to the education of young minds include Woodson Pipkin, who along with Charles Charlton, started the first African American school in Beaumont in 1870, and Mrs. Emmons Blanche Scott Grogan, the first female African-American principal in Beaumont. She was a teacher at Beaumont's Charlton-Pollard High school in the 1920's where she became principal.

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



Woodson Pipkin

Photograph of Woodson Pipkin
Credit: [Stephen F. Austin State University website](#)

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MARCH, 2019

Special points of interest:

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

JEFFERSON COUNTY FAST FACTS

1863

Year David French planted the first rice in Jefferson County on the old French homestead, three and a half miles from Beaumont.

8/10/1935

Date construction began on the Sub-Courthouse in Port Arthur. The project was funded by the Works Project Administration (WPA).

27

The number of stained glass windows incorporated by architect Henry C. Mauer into the design of the Caroline Hinchee House, which boasted 14 rooms, 7 fireplaces, and an elevator.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Orange Historical Marker Dedication - March 7, 2019 - 5:00pm to 7:00pm

Orange, TX (Orange County)

1210 Green Avenue

Orange Texas 77630

Come celebrate the dedication of a historical designation of the Orange Southern Pacific Depot. For more information, please contact the Orange County Historical Commission at jerryvpenn@sbcglobal.net

Credit: [Texas Historical Commission's Event Calendar](#)

Galveston Historical Marker Dedication - March 9, 2019 - 11:00am to 12:00pm

Galveston, TX (Galveston County) directly behind the 1838 Menard House

1605 33rd St.

Galveston, Texas 77550

Come celebrate the dedication of a historical marker for the Mexican Telegraph Company and the Zimmermann Telegram. For more information, please contact Will Wright, Director of Communications and Special Events at 409-765-3404 or will.wright@galvestonhistory.org.

Credit: [Texas Historical Commission's Event Calendar](#)

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.

- March 20, 2019
- 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 HERITAGE SOCIETY HAPPY HOUR AT TYRRELL PARK STABLES

Beaumont Heritage Society held their bi-monthly Heritage Happy Hour at the Tyrrell Park Stables on February 28, 2019. The event was well attended by those who appreciate historic preservation efforts. The twelve stall stable building was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp 845 from 1935-1941 as a portion of the larger park project undertaken by the New Deal's Work Project Administration (WPA). The Camp built the golf course, nature trails, picnic tables, and other buildings.

Also constructed at Tyrrell Park by the CCC was the Tyrrell Park Community Building, currently the focus of a community-led drive for restoration. The City of Beaumont has encouragingly designated \$2.1 million for a partial restoration of the building, and city officials have indicated the bid process may commence within sixty days.



Fireplace in the Tyrrell Park Stables
Photo Credit: Theresa Goodness



The Tyrrell Park Coalition, the community activist group leading the push for restoration, has pushed for a full restoration of the building and for the roof to be completely replaced over the entire structure. The city's plans call for one wing of the building to be left without a roof. Although the rest of the building will undergo an extensive renovation including the addition of air conditioning, the group is concerned leaving the roof off a large part of the building will result in continued damage to the historic structure, and ultimately the loss of a significant portion.

Several Members of JCHC belong to the Tyrrell Park Coalition, and one member, Bruce A. Hamilton, is the Co-Chair, along with Laurie Leister. No doubt we will be hearing more soon on this important preservation project.

Tyrrell Park Stables at Heritage Happy Hour
Photo Credit: Theresa Goodness

MYSTERY HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPH



This photograph was found in a miscellaneous file in the Jefferson County Clerk's Office. The subject of the photograph is unknown, but was printed as a postcard by Trost Studio, Port Arthur, Texas. There is a handwritten date of 1914, but the postcard itself was unused and never mailed.

Help solve the mystery...

Do you know who this is?

Unknown African American Man, circa 1914
Credit: Postcard by Trost Studio, Port Arthur, TX

BEAUMONT MAIN STREET ANNUAL MEETING

Beaumont Main Street held its annual meeting on January 24, 2019, at Westminster Church located at 530 N. Main St., in downtown Beaumont. The Westminster congregation was formed May 8, 1921, by a union of the First and Central Presbyterian Churches. The First Presbyterian Church was organized in February of 1880. The church building now standing at the site was constructed in 1910 and was first opened for public worship on January 15, 1911. The congregation received an historical marker to commemorate the Centennial of the congregation in 1979. The current building has been purchased by another congregation which plans to restore the building and is already using it for services.

City Manager, Kyle Hayes, was the guest speaker, and his presentation was on the great strides the city and its private partners had made in investing in downtown Beaumont over the last twenty years. The city has invested in new paved sidewalks and lighting, funded a \$2.5 million expansion of Tyrrell Historical Library, built the Event Centre with a great lawn and lake, constructed Mountain Skate Park, and is in the process of constructing a Best Years Senior Center adjacent to these areas. Private businesses have invested millions more dollars in projects like the Rotary Club Centennial Park located near the Event Centre, the Edison Plaza revitalization by new owner, Albanese Cormier Holdings, the Port of Beaumont's \$16 million expansion, and more.

The Jefferson County Historical Commission (JCHC) was the recipient of a Ten-Year Member Award from Beaumont Main Street. The award was a picture of the organization's name on the marquee of the Jefferson Theater in downtown Beaumont. Chair, Sarah Bellian, and members, Theresa Goodness and Bruce A. Hamilton, accepted on behalf of the Commission.



January 24, 2019 Westminster Presbyterian Church

L-R, JCHC Members Sarah Bellian, Theresa Goodness and Bruce A. Hamilton accept a Ten-Year Member Award from Beaumont Main Street on behalf of JCHC

Photo Credit: Steven Lewis

AREA MUSEUM UPCOMING EVENTS

Museum of the Gulf Coast

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

Chambers House Museum Lawn Party

March 28, 2019 @ 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Join us at the vintage inspired Chambers House Museum Lawn Party, held in celebration of Beaumont, Texas history and traditions. Bring the family or a group of friends to our beautiful grounds for old-fashioned games including croquet, badminton, and lawn bowling and meet the 2019 Neches River Festival Princesses and Escorts! The home will be open for a special tour, and we will have members of the Lamar University Dance Department on the grounds to teach and demonstrate dances from the period! Enjoy music performed by Brea Marshall while sampling refreshments typical of the time period. 1920s-40s attire encouraged, but not required. FREE to attend, so make plans to join us!

Credit: [Beaumont Heritage Society website](#)



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

McFaddin-Ward House Museum

Spring Picnic: April 25 @ at 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

It's Spring Picnic Time! We will gather on the East Lawn of the McFaddin-Ward House for our annual community picnic. It's a springtime tradition! Bring lawn chairs, kids, blankets, games, food, libations, cheese, ice chests, crackers, baskets, and anything else you need to have a picnic. No dogs, please, unless she's a service animal. Live music by Luke Whitney. Food for sale by the 4-H Club. Face painting. Art tables. So much family fun!

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



McFaddin-Ward House Museum

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

**JEFFERSON
COUNTY
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION**

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Linda McMahan, Coordinator



*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/)

Shell Detail of Fireplace
from Tyrrell Park Stables
built by CCC
Credit: Theresa Goodness



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

Postcards of the 1893 and 1931 Jefferson County Courthouse are from the collection of Jefferson County Historical Commission member Steven P. Lewis. The items on display are photographic 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.

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.

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