

# TIME CAPSULE

## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FORT BEND ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

*An affiliate of the Fort Bend History Association*

*600 Houston Street / Richmond, TX 77469*

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**General Meeting, November 16, 2021. 7:00 p.m.**

***“From the Ashes – Reviving the Townsite of San Felipe de Austin”***

***Speaker: Bryan McAuley***

San Felipe de Austin, founded on the banks of the Brazos River in the fall of 1823, lived a dynamic and engaged existence – hosting practically every prominent figure connected to the Mexican Texas era – before it was sacrificed during the Texas Revolution, burned to the ground as part of a military strategy after its residents were evacuated ahead of Santa Anna’s advancing army. Since 2008, the Texas Historical Commission has been committed to reviving the important stories and events of the town’s brief life. This fall, the final major exhibit component opens – the *Villa de Austin*. This modern-built imagining of a section of the town is rooted in deep-dive archival research and archeological investigation. Site Manager Bryan McAuley will share the process of planning for and delivering this exciting new visitor experience.



Bryan McAuley holds a BA in government/anthropology from the University of Texas at Austin and an MA in political science/sociology from Texas State University in San Marcos. He has worked in the museum field since 2000 with posts at the Texas Independence Trail Region, the Fort Bend History Association and, since 2008, with the Texas Historical Commission (THC). Since the initial sites transfer to the THC, Bryan has been part of the project team planning for visitor experiences at San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site – set within the footprint of the headquarters of Stephen F. Austin’s Colony in Mexican Texas. The new museum and visitor center opened in April of 2018 and has been well-received by visitors from across the state. He also serves as the distance manager of the Fannin Battleground state historic site. In 2021, Bryan received the annual “Site Manager’s Award” from the THC for his service and achievement. Bryan and his wife Amanda – an elementary educator – raised their family in west Fort Bend County and are now the empty-nesting parents of two adult daughters, Zoe and Piper. Bryan and Amanda live in the small town of San Felipe, where he enjoys the shortest commute he’s ever managed.

Location: Fort Bend Museum, 410 S. Fifth Street in Richmond, Texas. The meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome - the program is free and open to the public.

## Field Notes – Archeology along the Brazos

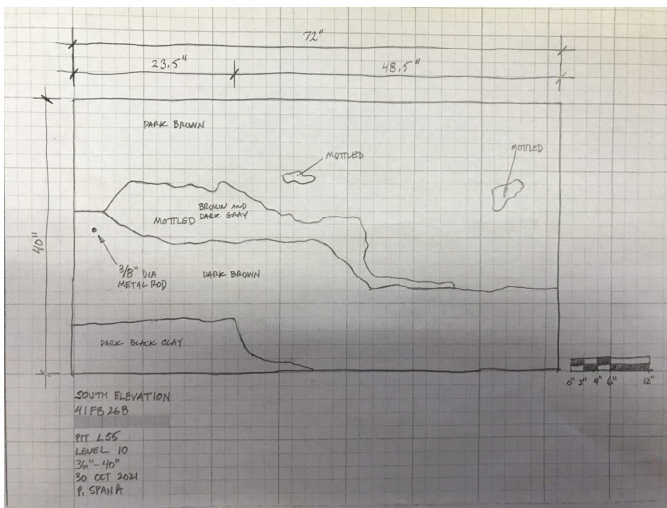
For the past several weekends, FBAS members have been working in Pit L55. In the pit, there is a distinct straight line between contrasting colors of soil type and color. A feature such as this does not occur naturally. It is evidence of a hole that was dug by someone in the past and later filled back in. More work needs to be done to see the extent of this feature. Knowing the size and shape of the feature may offer clues as to what it was. FBAS members dig every Saturday and welcome anyone who would like to help. If you are interested in joining please contact us. No experience necessary – we'll help train you with the proper methods of excavating!



This is the floor of pit L55 at 40 inches. As we excavated deeper the vertical soil interface became very distinct. The soil on the northern part of the pit became darker enhancing the contrast with the lighter soil to the south.



Bruce Grethen documents the excavation pit floor and walls as we progress deeper.



A drawing was made of the excavation's south wall. Known as a profile, it documents different layers of soil visible.



The team takes a moment to step back and discuss the bigger picture of what's being uncovered.

# FBAS Meeting Minutes - October 19, 2021

The Fort Bend Archeological Society met at the Fort Bend Museum, Richmond TX. In attendance were 14 members and 7 guests. Paul Spana, Co-President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes from September 21, 2021 - No objections, minutes stand as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Balance as of October 12, 2021 is \$4,602.82 - No objections, Treasurer's Report stands accepted.

### Projects

- Spana gave a brief presentation about the current pit the society is excavating. Pit L55 is next to pits AP and AM the society excavated in 2002. A demarcation line between dark clay and brown sandy soil is visible in L55 which happens to also line up with the two pits from 2002. This feature is an encouraging sign of Lamar's house. One thought is that it might be evidence of a root cellar.

**Old Business:** No old business.

### New Business:

- Spana announced the next FBAS monthly meeting will be held at the Fort Bend Museum building again. The next speaker will be announced on the FBAS Facebook page, the newsletter and the Herald newspaper.

### Presentation:

Spana introduced Author Chris Kneupper who spoke about his research and findings of the Forts Velasco. Thomas Hines of the Surfside Beach Historical Committee and the Brazoria County Old Fort Velasco Committee was also present. He explained how the Surfside community would like to find the lost monument dedicated to the men who lost their lives at Fort Velasco. If it cannot be located, their group plans to have a new one built.

Meeting adjourned 8:30 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Paul Spana

## Treasurer's Report

<b>Balance as of October 12, 2021</b>				<b>\$4,602.82</b>	
Deposit	10/26/2021	FBHA - transfer from Chevron	Jay Roussel volunteer and matching	+520.00	
	1974	10/29/2021	Fort Bend Museum	Books for October speakers	- 46.62
	1975	11/12/2021	FBHA	Postage - November 2021	- 5.30
<b>Balance as of November 12, 2021</b>				<b>\$5,070.90</b>	

Submitted by  
Claire Rogers, Treasurer