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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

PRESENTS THIS

2024

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

TO

NAVARRO COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

IN RECOGNITION OF ITS ACTIVE
AND WELL-BALANCED PRESERVATION PROGRAM


EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 30, 2025

DATE



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION 
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES



Navarro County Historical Commission
2024 Annual Report Summary:
Distinguished Service Award Presentation
August 11, 2025

Dr. MaryJane McReynolds, Chair; Faith Boyd, Vice Chair
Stephen Farris, Secretary; Sheryl Hicks-Treasurer
Danny Combs, Gary Connor, Margaret Thomas, Kit Herrington, Bruce McManus

The Navarro County Historical Commission is proud to present this summary of our 2024 Annual Report highlighting our projects and accomplishments.* Our work is ongoing throughout the year and many preservation efforts span a period of several years. All efforts strengthen our ability to preserve and protect our diverse historic resources. All work is done by dedicated volunteers.

We were awarded a 2024 Distinguished Service Award from the Texas Historical Commission in acknowledgement of efforts and accomplishments that demonstrate well-rounded history and preservation programs that enrich our county. These include:

- **Park High School Historical Marker.** We researched and submitted a successful Historical Marker application. This is the only remaining Rosenwald School building in our county. Three Rosenwald Schools were built in Navarro Co., 1921-1926, to educate African American children. We also researched and obtained grants for repairing the building, and participated in community fund-raising efforts aimed at structure preservation. July 2024 quarterly meeting was held in Kerens to gather oral histories from former students, and displayed historic photo enlargements.
- **GW Jackson Historical Marker Dedication, Aug. 10th, 2014.** Planned and facilitated dedication ceremony with local county and state officials attending and in collaboration with the GW Jackson Multicultural Society. Historical Marker honors pioneering educator and civic leader who served as the founding principal of Fred Douglass School/GW Jackson High School.
- **Derrick Days.** Fifth year to staff booth and raise awareness about historic preservation, share information about our county history, answer questions and distribute "Tell Your Story" booklets to encourage recording family histories.
- **Pioneer Village/Historical Society.** Sponsored new Peace Officers' Museum sign and living history re-enactments and demonstrations at Pioneer Thanksgiving.
- **Cemetery Preservation.** This is a cornerstone of our preservation efforts. We collaborated with individual caretakers and cemetery associations, visited sites to monitor physical conditions, and assisted with Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) and Historical Marker applications:
 - Zion's Rest Cemetery, N. Beaton, outside Corsicana city limits-researched Historical Marker application, assisted with cemetery association development.
 - Friendship Baptist Church and Cemetery, Eureka – assisted caretaker with church preservation
 - Good Hope Cemetery, Powell – communicated with landowner to gain access to check condition
 - Rice Memorial Cemetery – provided HTC and Historical Marker applications to descendants
 - White Church Cemetery-Blooming Grove – assisted with successful Historical Marker application
 - Rose Hill Cemetery, Blooming Grove - assisted with HTC application
 - Ingram Cemetery, Rural Shade – consulted with landowner about removing vegetation
 - Petty's Chapel Cemetery, Roane Road - began research for Historical Marker application
 - White Cemetery-Pisgah Ridge - assisted with restart of cemetery association; drafted by-laws

(over)

- **Collaboration and Partnerships**

We regularly communicate and meet with citizens regarding a variety of history and preservation topics, and we promote historical and cultural sites to sustain heritage tourism initiatives. We routinely collaborate with other history-focused organizations within our county, region, state, and participate in THC workshops, webinars and other forms of training.

We are able to practice advocacy, build and maintain relationships and connections with organizations and individuals who are committed to historic preservation (e.g. Blooming Grove Historical Society, Navarro County Genealogy Society, James Blair Chapter of the DAR, GW Jackson Multicultural Society, Kerens Veterans Memorial and Military Museum, Frost Heritage Society, Pioneer Village/Historical Society, Corsicana Preservation Foundation, Corsicana Main Street Program, and surrounding County Historical Commissions). In addition, we have a cemetery association network, and we work hard to stay in touch with folks who actively care for our historic cemeteries. The result is a positive impact in our county.

Our work requires thousands of hours of volunteers' time and dedicated effort, countless number of miles driven, and all so that we can reach out to all parts of the county to emphasize that historic preservation requires all of us.

* The complete 2024 Annual Report required by the Texas Historical Commission is available upon request.