



## Inaugural Michael C. Duda Preservation Awards Recognizes Four Projects



*2024 Micheal C. Duda Preservation Award winners with the Duda family (seated) and THF directors*

Texas Historical Foundation recognized four outstanding preservation organizations for their work to preserve important places in Texas at the inaugural Michael C. Duda Preservation Awards on April 20th at the George W. Bush Presidential Library. The gala event was presented by Matthews Southwest.

The recognition followed a rigorous selection process that considered dozens of nominees from across the state, and the four projects selected represent the most impressive preservation efforts currently underway in Texas. The Award, named in honor of architect and late Foundation Board Member Michael Duda, recognizes excellence in the preservation of historic architecture and provides funding for the organizations to continue their good work. The

organizations recognized included:

- **Friends of the Wheelock School House, Wheelock** – Through their work at the 1908 Wheelock School House, the Friends of the Wheelock School House have consistently demonstrated the potential of grassroots organizing and the power of community engagement to preserve a cherished public space. The group was awarded \$100,000 for their preservation of the School House, funds they plan to use to complete exterior restoration of the wood frame school-turned-community center.
- **Flower Hill Center, Austin** – Situated in Austin’s urban core, the 1877 Smoot House is home to the Urban Homestead Museum, operated by the Flower Hill Center. The property’s distinctive main house and outbuildings offer a window into the city’s past while highlighting the civic engagement of the Smoot family and promoting local arts and culture. The Flower Hill Center received \$30,000, which the group plans to use in the house's stabilization.
- **Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum, Cuero** - Since opening in 2013, the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum has exemplified the transformative power of preservation in small-town public life, both on and off the Museum campus. The group received \$20,000 towards the restoration of the 1894 Trautwein and 1920 Cook & Day buildings, part of a plan to expand the museum campus to create space for exhibitions on Texas history, art, regional culture, and public gatherings.
- **Rutherford B.H. Yates Museum, Houston** – For decades, the Yates Museum has preserved what is among the most complete examples of an urban Freedmen’s Town, drawing into focus a rich portrait of this critical piece of Texas history. The group received an honorable mention Texas Historical Foundation Directors’ Award of \$11,000 to go towards their work at the 1907 Isabella Simms Cottage. Their vision of a restored Simms Cottage as one of six museums interpreting Houston’s Freedmen’s Town Historic District will allow visitors to engage with this dynamic site in its totality.

The four organizations, while diverse in geography and purpose, are aligned in their uncompromising dedication to serving their communities by preserving the spaces that connect us to our shared past. Each exemplifies the transformative qualities that architectural preservation offers – the fellowship and pride of place inherent to experiencing our collective heritage as Texans. We congratulate the four winners and look forward to the completion of their projects.

A series of short films by Dallas filmmaker Mark Birnbaum debuted at the event and featured the life of Michael C. Duda as well as the three projects selected for the 2024 Michael C. Duda Awards. The films are now available for viewing [on our website](#).



*Friends of the Wheelock School House will continue renovations to the 1908 building that is an important part of the Wheelock community.*

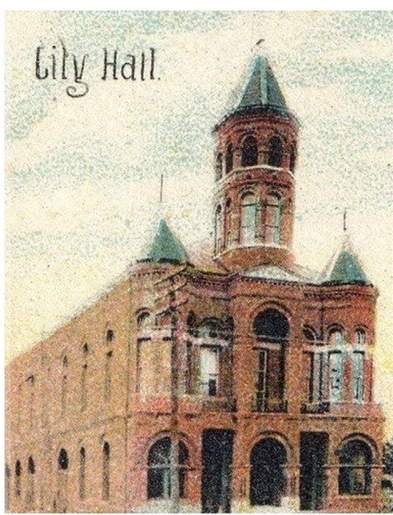
## Grants Update

### Rockdale's Old City Hall Bell Tower Returns

Earlier this month THF President & CEO David Preziosi and Board Member Clark Wernecke (not pictured) went to Rockdale to watch the reconstructed bell tower return to the town's old City Hall, now called The 1895. Vision Historic Preservation Foundation has been the driving force behind the campaign to restore the building to its original design, turning back the clock on decades of renovations that had left the A.O. Watson-designed building unrecognizable. THF supported Vision Historic's effort last year with a grant, and we look forward to witnessing the continued restoration of this fabulous building.



*THF President & CEO David Preziosi presents a grant to Curah Beard, Director of Vision Historic Preservation Foundation*



Rockdale's Old City Hall's original appearance (left), after the 1940 renovation (middle), and today (right).



*THF President & CEO David Preziosi and board members Shannon Wilson Callewart and Bernie Sargent presented a grant to Friends of the THC and some of the scholarship recipients.*

## Friends of the Texas Historical Commission

Real Places 2024 was a great chance for THF President & CEO David Preziosi and Grants Director Ryann Griffin to attend some great workshops and network with preservation partners from around the state. While at the conference, they presented a grant to Friends of the THC that supported a scholarship fund for students and community organizations to attend the 2024 Real Places conference.

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## Texas Map Society Spring Meeting: All Over the Map

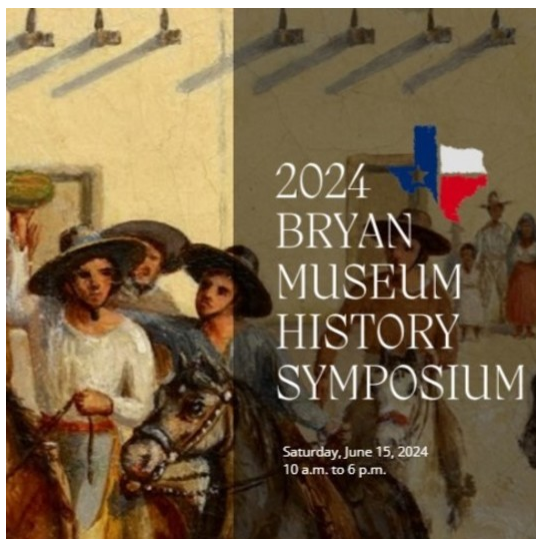
May 3-4, 2024 | Austin, TX



**Texas Map Society**

The Texas Map Society (TMS) will be convening its Spring Meeting in Austin on May 3-4 at the Texas General Land Office. The meeting will include tours of the Briscoe Center, Ransom Center, LILAS Benson Latin American Studies and Collections Map Collections, and General Land Office. This meeting, organized around the theme of “All Over the Map,” will take an exciting look at a cross-section of cartographic topics, including Public History and Mapping projects at the GLO, map conservation efforts at the Ransom Center, as well as historical cartography centering on the Jeffersonian era, English explorer Charles Wylde, Indigenous mapping in the Texas-Mexico Borderlands, the impact of the Spanish-American War of 1898 on the cartography of Puerto Rico, as well as student presentations on African Cartography during the Dutch Golden Age, the Cassini Map of France, and the mapping resources of Stephen F. Austin at the Briscoe Center.

For only \$50, attendees will have access to Saturday lectures. The Friday tours have sold out. [Register here.](#)



## 2024 Bryan Museum History Symposium

June 15, 2024 | Galveston, TX

This summer the Bryan Museum is presenting its inaugural session of the Bryan Museum History Symposium, and the Texas Historical Foundation is a proud sponsor. This new, annual event explores topics in Texas history with elite scholars from across the state. The 2024

symposium examines the lives of Texans of Mexican descent during Texas’s most volatile era in conjunction with our special exhibit *Tejanos of Revolutionary Texas*, open through July 7, 2024. Included among the impressive list of speakers is THF Board Member Frank de la Teja, who will be speaking about Erasmo Seguín and the

Creation of Mexican Texas.

Registration is \$40 for members of the Museum, \$75 for non-members, and \$25 for teachers, students, and current TBM volunteers. Non-members receive a discount for registering before May 1st. [Register here.](#)

### Partner

Claire Verchot and Thomas Pritchett

### Ranger

Deborah Cartwright  
B.F. Hicks

### Institution

Dallas County Pioneer Association, Dallas  
Stone Fort Museum, Nacogdoches  
Texas Archive of the Moving Image, Austin  
The Williamson Museum, Georgetown  
Verdigris Ensemble, Dallas

A BIG TEXAS-SIZED

*Thank You*

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