

**Brazoria County Historical Commission**  
**Notice and Agenda**  
**Wednesday, May 10, 2023**  
**2:00 p.m.**

Brazoria County Tax Office Conference Room in the West Annex  
at 451 North Velasco, Angleton, Texas  
<https://www.brazoriacountytx.gov/departments/historical-commission>

**Minutes from March 2023**

**Treasurer's Report**

**Presentation:** Columbia 1836 by Laurie Kincannon

**Vote:** Endorse Columbia 1836

**Committee Reports:**

- **Medallion & Old House Inventory Project**
- **THCGA Liaison**
- **Webpage**
- **Texas Treasures Business Award**
  - o Chesney's Jewelry, 241 East Brazos Street, West Columbia
    - Presentation May 19 at 2pm
- **Markers**
  - o Jones Creek Marker Cleaning Project Presentation by Barbara Sloan and Anna Galloway.
  - o Application in Progress for November submission for Undertold Marker for the Geo. W Carver American Legion Post, Angleton.
  - o Application to Move the Velasco Historical Marker from Hwy 332 to Monument Park submitted by Michelle Booth, Surfside Tourism; pending identification of landowner.
  - o Historic Texas Cemetery Marker Application submitted by Larry Thomas for the Thomas-Dumas Cemetery, which was designated a Historic Texas Cemetery in 2020. It is located on the east side of the Brazos River and the west side of CR 401. Landowner permission obtained and thus approved by the Chair on behalf of the BCHC.

The purpose of the BCHC shall be to preserve, promote, and stimulate public interest in the history of Brazoria County.

- Marker Application to be submitted: Thomas Dodson Cayce by Tracy Gupton, Columbia Cemetery Association Board of Trustees
  - **Vote:** Approval of Narrative text.

**Chair Report:**

- **Welcome to our New Members:**
  - Jo Francis Chastain;
  - Portia Hopkins;
  - Taryne Melovsky; and
  - Blue Schuler.
- **Update on TX HB 1871 (Vasut)** Relating to designation of a portion of Farm-to-Market Road 521 in Brazoria County as the Clarence "BB" Sasser Medal of Honor Highway

**Announcements:**

- Scott Leopold: Masons of Texas will celebrate with its own Most Worshipful Grand Master of Texas Masons, G. Clay Smith at the Masonic Oak Park in the City of Brazoria on Sunday, **May 21, 2023** from 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. to Honor our Texas Masonic Hero's. **The Brazoria Co. Commissioners' Court proclaimed May 21, 2023, as Masonic Day in Brazoria County.**
- Michael Bailey: **Columbia Museum Rosenwald School Children's Play Day** is **June 17** from 10am to 2 pm. Contact Museum at 979 -345-6125.
- **June 27, 2023**, at 7pm: **Dedication of the Battle of Velasco Monument** by the Old Fort Velasco Historical Association and Old Velasco/Surfside Beach Historical Committee. Contact is Karalee Lance at [Karalee.lance@gmail.com](mailto:Karalee.lance@gmail.com).

**Next Meeting:** July 12, 2023, at 2pm



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
LAURIE B. KINCANNON

## **Columbia 1836 Call to Action**

Enhance the story of Texas with the inclusion of West Columbia (Columbia1836) as Texas Historical Commission historic site.

Your Call to Action: A letter of support for Columbia 1836 project with a Salutation to the Texas Historical Commission.

Dear Texas Historical Commission:

### **Key Points:**

- 1) Columbia is the First Capital of the Republic of Texas. The First Congress of the Republic convened October 1836.
- 2) The First President of the Republic Sam Houston and Vice-President Mirabeau B. Lamar took the oath of office in Columbia on October 22, 1836.
- 3) The First Congress of the Republic ratified the Constitution, which created a judicial branch and land office, provided for the army and navy and protection from Indians, established a financial system, and adopted an official seal and flag.
- 4) Following his capture at San Jacinto, Santa Anna was imprisoned in and around Columbia for many months.
- 5) Stephen F. Austin, proclaimed as the "Father of Texas" died in Columbia on December 27, 1836. His body lay in state in the House of Representatives for three days.
- 6) Early Texas Newspaper-Telegraph and Texas Register operated in Columbia following the burning of San Felipe.
- 7) The story of the people and places of Texas is incomplete without the inclusion of Columbia in 1836.

Please hand-deliver letters of support to West Columbia City Hall or e-mail to [kincannonlaurie@gmail.com](mailto:kincannonlaurie@gmail.com). These letters will be hand delivered to State Representative Cody Vasut, State Senator Joan Huffman, and the Texas Historical Commission's Executive Director.

Monetary donations and/or letters of commitment to purchase available property near the capitol buildings original site in downtown West Columbia are needed. Checks, made to the City of West Columbia noting Columbia 1836 on the memo line and dropped off at City Hall or mailed to P.O. Box 487, West Columbia, TX 77486. Donations through the city are tax deductible.

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## Details for Velasco

Historical Marker — Atlas Number 5039009605

### Data

<b>Marker Number</b>	9605
<b>Atlas Number</b>	5039009605
<b>Marker Title</b>	Velasco
<b>Index Entry</b>	Velasco
<b>Address</b>	
<b>City</b>	Surfside
<b>County</b>	Brazoria
<b>UTM Zone</b>	15
<b>UTM Easting</b>	277201
<b>UTM Northing</b>	3204712
<b>Subject Codes</b>	Texas Revolution, Republic of Texas; military topics
<b>Marker Year</b>	1965
<b>Recorded Texas Historic Landmark</b>	No
<b>Private Property</b>	No
<b>Marker Location</b>	SH 332, 1 block south of Intracoastal Waterway
<b>Marker Condition</b>	In Situ
<b>Marker Size</b>	27" x 42"

#### Marker Text

Here was fought a battle-- the first collision in arms between Texas colonists and the Mexican military-- a conflict preliminary to the Texas War for Independence. On June 26, 1832, when Texans under John Austin and Henry Smith came down river with cannon for use against Mexican forces at Anahuac, they ran against the resistance of Lt. Col. Domingo de Ugartechea. As commander of Mexican forces at Velasco, Ugartechea refused passage through the mouth of the Brazos River to the vessel bearing the cannon to Anahuac. Some 112 Texans attacked the port at midnight, and after 9 hours under the fire of Texas rifles and cannon, the Mexican garrison was forced to surrender. The Battle of Velasco, brought on by a customs quarrel at Anahuac, was unknowingly fought after the dispute at Anahuac had been peaceably settled. After the victory at San Jacinto 4 years later, President David G. Burnet moved the capital of the Republic of Texas temporarily to Velasco. Here the Treaty of Velasco, ending hostilities between Texas and Mexico, was signed on May 14, 1836. (1965)

ATLAS\_NUM=5039009605

### Location Map

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## Details for Thomas-Dumas Cemetery

Cemetery — Atlas Number 7039010805

### Data

<b>Cemetery ID Number</b>	BO-C108
<b>Cemetery Name</b>	Thomas-Dumas Cemetery
<b>Additional Names</b>	Thomas Family; Dumars; Willow Glen Plantation
<b>Directions</b>	On the east side of the Brazos River and the west side of CR 401 (River Rd. E.)
<b>Source</b>	
<b>City</b>	East Columbia
<b>County</b>	Brazoria
<b>HTC Designation Date</b>	8/18/2020
<b>Size</b>	
<b>Number of graves</b>	20-30
<b>Burial Dates</b>	first marked 1950s-present
<b>Feature Type</b>	cemetery
<b>Deed</b>	
<b>Survey</b>	
<b>Abstract</b>	
<b>Latitude</b>	29.146234
<b>Longitude</b>	-95.594392
<b>Atlas Number</b>	7039010805
<b>Atlas Map</b>	Yes

CEMNUM='BO-C108'

### Location Map

## THOMAS DODSON CAYCE

Columbia Cemetery, West Columbia, Texas

By Tracy Gupton

Thomas Dodson Cayce moved to Texas from Tennessee in December 1829<sup>1</sup>, making the trek by boat from Memphis<sup>2</sup>. He established a ferry near where the bridge over the Colorado River is now just west of Bay City, near the head of what was referred to as Bay Prairie in the days of early Anglo settlements in what today is Matagorda County.

After Stephen F. Austin led a large group of American settlers into Texas in the early 1820s, Thomas Dodson Cayce received a land grant of a league and a labor (4,605 acres) in Matagorda County and moved there with his wife and their children in 1830.

Cayce's Ferry was utilized by both the Texan and Mexican armies to get across the Colorado River during the Spring of 1836 when Texas settlers were fighting for their independence from Mexican rule. Upon news of the fall of the Alamo and the massacre at Goliad amidst the continuing retreat of General Sam Houston's Texian Army, Hannah Cayce took her family and servants to Galveston while her husband Thomas was participating as a soldier with Houston's army. Thus, the Cayce family was involved in "The Runaway Scrape," the Cayce children and their mother retreating to safety on Galveston Island.

In 1835-36 Thomas Cayce served in Captain Thomas Stewart's Matagorda Volunteers<sup>4</sup> who fought at the Siege of Bexar. There was a small army post at Cayce's Ferry, garrisoned by 30 to 40 men. This Texian army post was in existence from the latter part of November 1836, until about June of 1837.

Following the Texian army's victory at the Battle of San Jacinto in April 1836 and the capture of Mexican President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, Thomas Cayce decided to move his family from their former home on the Colorado River to a site on a ridge between Caney Creek and Cedar Lake, near the coast. On this newly chosen spot, he managed a cotton plantation and established his family residence.

On January 22, 1839, Cayce sold his land and the ferry on the Colorado River to George Elliott<sup>3</sup>. There is a state historical marker for Elliott's Ferry near the Colorado River bridge on Highway 35 in Bay City.

Thomas Dodson Cayce was a charter member of the Matagorda Masonic Lodge<sup>5</sup>.

He was born September 12, 1795, in Cumberland County, Virginia, the eldest child of Shadrach Cayce and Mary Ann Dodson Cayce. Thomas's father was a Baptist preacher, merchant and farmer.<sup>6</sup> His family moved to Williamson County, Tennessee, where Thomas married Hannah Ada Stanley October 14, 1815.

The Cayce family operated a prosperous plantation once Thomas sold his Matagorda County property and bought the J.F. Tong league on the west side of the San Bernard River in Brazoria County, located about five miles from Columbia<sup>7</sup>.

This veteran of the Texas Revolution, a man who operated an important river ferry during the time Texas won its independence from Mexico, and later a successful farmer in Brazoria County, died at the age of 62 on September 17, 1857<sup>8</sup>. Thomas Dodson Cayce is buried at historic Columbia Cemetery in West Columbia, Texas, in an unmarked grave near the burial site of his son, Augustus. Thomas Cayce died at his residence near the San Bernard River<sup>9</sup>.

The youngest son of Thomas and Hannah Cayce, Augustus, was born in 1839 and died tragically at the young age of 10 or 11 in 1850 when he was kicked in the abdomen by a spooked horse in his father's stable<sup>7</sup>. Thomas Dodson Cayce also lost his eldest son tragically. George Washington Cayce was killed by Comanche Indians March 19, 1840, at the Council House Fight in San Antonio<sup>10</sup>.

The historic Columbia Cemetery was donated to the community of Columbia in the 1800s by Mary Bell, wife of East Columbia and West Columbia founder Josiah Hughes Bell. Josiah died in 1838 and his widow Mary continued to manage the Bell's plantation near Columbia long after the capitol of the Republic of Texas was moved from Columbia to Houston in 1837.

Josiah and Mary Bell's son, Thaddeus Constantine Bell, believed to be the first Anglo male baby born in Stephen F. Austin's "Old 300" colony in 1822, married Thomas and Hannah Cayce's daughter, Elizabeth Hodges Cayce, in Brazoria County August 3, 1847. Elizabeth Cayce Bell, who died February 24, 1867, when she was only 36, is believed to have been buried at Columbia Cemetery near Josiah and Mary Bell's graves, which are not far from where Thomas Dodson Cayce, his wife Hannah and their young son Augustus are buried.

George Washington Cayce, Shadrach Cayce and Henry Petty Cayce – all sons of Thomas and Hannah Cayce – fought with their father during the Texas Revolution. Shadrach (1818-1884) served under Sam Houston, Colonel Henry Petty Cayce (1819-1875) helped the Texans capture La Bahia at Goliad from the Mexican Army when he was only 16 years old, and George was killed by Indians<sup>11</sup> at San Antonio while serving in the Texas Army. Henry Cayce eluded execution at Goliad<sup>10</sup> because he had been assigned the duty of guarding several wagons because of his young age.

After escaping the Goliad Massacre, Henry Cayce made his way to the Colorado River where he met up with General Sam Houston who thought Henry was too young for battle. He missed out on being involved in the victorious Texan battle at San Jacinto because Sam Houston had assigned him to assist women and children during the "Runaway Scrape."

A Muster Roll of Captain Thomas Stewart's Company of the Matagorda Volunteers dated July 15, 1836, lists Thomas Cayce and his sons George W. Cayce and Shadrach Cayce, all as privates<sup>4</sup>. This 1836 Muster Roll is on file in Volume 1, Page 658 of Matagorda County records.

The Columbia Cemetery Board of Trustees is requesting approval of a Texas Historical Commission marker honoring the memory of Thomas Dodson Cayce. The cemetery board's intention is to place the new historical marker at the gravesite of Thomas Dodson Cayce when it arrives and host a dedication ceremony for the historical marker.

## Bibliography

- 1 Young, Barbara L., Texas State Historical Association, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/cayce-henry-petty>
- 2 wikitree.com, Wiki Tree online biography of Thomas Dodson Cayce
- 3 Matagorda County Historical Marker, Elliott's Ferry
- 4 "Muster Roll of Captain Stewart's Company, Matagorda Volunteers, July 15, 1836." Historic Matagorda County, Volume 1, page 658.
- 5 Winnett, Don, "A History of Matagorda Lodge #7 A.F.&A.M., Matagorda, Texas.
- 6 Parks, Nancy Ann, sister of Thomas Dodson Cayce, in a letter dated December 16, 1893, written to A.P. McCormick
- 7 McCormick, Andrew Phelps, Scotch-Irish in Ireland and in America, Chapter 5, 1897.
- 8 Civilian and Gazette, Galveston, Texas, Tuesday, September 29, 1857, Page 2. [Thomas Dodson Cayce death notice]
- Young, Barbara, Texas State Historical Association website, December 1, 1994 [Henry Petty Cayce biography], [www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/cayce-henry-petty](http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/cayce-henry-petty)
- 9 [www.findagrave.com/memorial/204349134/thomas-dodson-cayce](http://www.findagrave.com/memorial/204349134/thomas-dodson-cayce)
- 10 Young, Barbara L., Texas State Historical Association website, December 1, 1994 [Henry Petty Cayce biography], [www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/cayce-henry-petty](http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/cayce-henry-petty)
- 11 Schilz, Jodye Lynn Dickson, Texas State Historical Association website, October 19, 2020 [Council House Fight]