

## **BENKE-NAEGELIN HOMESTEAD – (Demolished 2005)**

The Benke-Naegelin Homestead was formerly located at 12930 Hausman Road. Final owner: Northside Independent School District.

The original stone-built homestead was built by Alex and Elise J. (nee Biering) Benke about 1888. The original house, the additions and the subsequent stone-built outbuildings were excellent examples of Texas vernacular architecture of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In 1936, 190.12 acres, including the homestead property, passed to the Benke's daughter, Dorothea M. Benke (1898-1984). She had married Frank J. Naegelin (1894-1973) in 1924. Farming and ranching activities on the property included bee keeping, the raising of chickens and turkeys, hog raising, cattle and the growing of oats primarily for the cattle.

In December 2004, The Center for Archaeological Research, the University of Texas at San Antonio (CARs) began an archaeological study and archival research project on the Naegelin Tract. The study was undertaken due to the proposed expansion of De Zavala Road and of Kyle Seale road which would have impacted the tract in two different locations. The remains of a main stone building and nine (9) outbuildings were documented in addition to an unmarked grave. In early January 2005, a fire, which was determined to be arson, severely damaged the primary homestead. On February 16, 2005, Ann McGlone, Historical Preservation Officer for the City of San Antonio submitted a request to the City of San Antonio's Historic Design and Review Commission requesting a designation of the property as "Historical Significance", i.e., a City Landmark. This request was subsequently denied. On March 14, 2005, an abatement consultant issued a statement indicating that the structures should be demolished, "because they represented a safety risk due to planned asbestos abatement activities." The CAR staff returned to the site on March 28, 2005 to complete a measured floor plan of the stone-built structures, only to find that the structures had been demolished.

The full report of the Archaeological Survey and Archival Research of the Naegelin Tract, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas, authored by Jennifer L. Thompson and Antonia L. Figueroa can be downloaded at:

[digital.utsa.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15125coll8/id/47527](http://digital.utsa.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15125coll8/id/47527)

SOURCE: Archaeological Survey and Archival Research of the Naegelin Tract, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas, Jennifer L. Thompson and Antonia L. Figueroa, Center for Archaeological Research, The University of Texas at San Antonio, Archaeological Survey Report, #354, 2005.