



**Old Coke County Jail Dedication!** People in period dress added to the historic atmosphere at the dedication of the old Coke County Jail and its new annex Saturday morning, September 20, 2014. The overflow of attendees were protected from the rain as they listened to Bobby Blaylock and the program inside the new building.



## Old Jail's history detailed in Saturday's ceremony

Descendants of Coke County pioneer families, descendants of Coke County sheriffs, present and past sheriffs, and honored guests made up a special audience for the dedication of the 1907 Coke County Jail. Also, a room full of people with various connections to the history of the county and the preservation process of the Coke County Historical Commission added to the support for preserving the history of Coke County.

The Old Jail has a dedication plaque to Roberta Cole Johnson of Brenham, Texas, whose bequest funded the restoration and future maintenance of the building. The annex building has been named the Blake Annex to honor Charles and Joy Millican Blake who were entrusted by Mrs. Johnson to name the projects worthy of her bequest.

Two special guests couldn't make the ceremony. Charles and Joy Blake were confined to their home in Brenham because Charles had tackled a project which left him with a viral infection to be treated with intravenous and then oral antibiotics until the infection is eradicated. They were missed by those in attendance.

Kara Dotter came from San Diego to see the completion of a project for which she laid the groundwork. Her masters thesis from the University of Texas documented the

construction and laid out a preservation plan in accordance with the preservation practices of historical projects nation-wide.

Jeff McCrea, his family, and parents were acknowledged for making the preservation process their own and carrying out the plan that had been established. Preservation is not an HGTV-flip project with Skill saws and sledge hammers. It is more hack saws and putty knives and bended backs that reveal, preserve and protect building structure.

Bonita Copeland Cartrite researched and wrote A History of the Old Coke County Jail and Sheriffs with Related Facts and Tales documenting the lives and events of her father, Sheriff Melvin Childress who along with her mother Essie Childress were the last to live in the Old Jail during the 1960's. She and her family were honored at the event. Funds from the sale of her book were donated to the Coke County Historical Commission and there are only a few of the books left. A re-print is planned to include Sheriff McCutchen.

Eddie Paul and Billie Roberts Good were acknowledged for having the close ties to the Old Jail where Mr. Good lived with his family and Mrs. Good is a Coke County pioneer descendant. Mrs. Bobbie Allen (Bill) and Mrs. Peggy Davis (Vaughn) and Mrs. Phelan Wrinkle were acknowledged for their over-seeing of the preservation process and

handling the paper work.

Commissioner Bobby Blaylock was the MC for the program and was acknowledged for his store of Coke County history and his problem solving throughout the preservation process. As have been mentioned with appreciation, Coke County commissioners and their staffs, the City staff, Olive Nursery and Britten's Garden and Landscape for falling in to complete the xeriscape project and George Grim for having seen to the



conquering of the weeds over the years.

Future plans for the annex are

developing and the area will soon be ready to preserve and exhibit Coke County history.

*Laura W. Bush*  
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