

From Miss Brittany Guardia....4th Grade Experiences George Ranch

The 4th-grade class recently had the pleasure of visiting the George Ranch just outside of Richmond.

Officially established in 1824, the George Ranch began as a 475-acre tract of land that the Jones family purchased from the Mexican government. The Ranch's history began when Henry and Nancy Jones, members of Stephen F. Austin's "Old 300", received a league of land along the Brazos River in the Mexican territory known as Tejas. The ranch has been part of Texas history from the beginning of the Texas colony, and has been a working cattle ranch since Texas won its independence from Mexico.

The students visited the Jones's homestead, a Dog Trot cabin built in 1824. There, they learned how to make cornbread in the outdoor kitchen, how to clean and card cotton, and about how the Jones family made a living by selling their cotton and cattle to merchants "back east." After lunch, the 4th graders talked with some of the cowboys who work on the ranch and experienced a roping and cattle working demonstration. Next, we toured the 1890s Victorian mansion originally used as a dormitory for the nurses who worked at the Polly Ryon hospital in Richmond. Polly, the eldest daughter of Henry Jones, inherited the ranch from her father. The students got to see the Ladies' parlor, the gentlemen's sitting room, the dining room, and the kitchen. We learned that there were over 100 etiquette rules for eating meals in the dining room with the family, and that no children were allowed to eat with the adults until they were 14 years old! Until that time, they would most likely have eaten in the kitchen with the cook or a maid.

Lastly, we visited the grounds of the 1920 Ranch House. The house was built after the family gained more wealth by participating in the oil boom that impacted most of the Gulf Coast during that time, as they built the Big Creek Oil Field in the 1920s. Cattle and Oil have been important to the Texas economy for many decades, and the George Ranch has been blessed with the success from both industries.

Mamie George is a direct descendant of the Jones and Ryon families. She and her husband, Albert George, created the George Ranch Foundation in 1945 with the purposeful intent to give back to the community that blessed their lives. Mamie and Albert had no living heirs and therefore wanted to see the ranch and its many profitable aspects to be put to good use for the betterment and enrichment of Fort Bend County.

Over the years, hospitals, schools, agricultural, and educational programs have been created due to the success and generosity of the George Ranch Foundation and the George Ranch itself.

The Historic George Ranch Association was officially rededicated to the public of Fort Bend County in 2024, with the opening of the new visitor/learning center. This is always one of my favorite field trips, and it speaks to the bravery and tenacity of the "Old 300" families of Texas. We had a lovely time, and cannot wait to go back!





Back L-R: Brittan Bailey, Harrison Goodwin, Henry Kocian, Emiliano Alegria, Cavitt Krumrey, Cru Smidt, Stella Burson, Alex Dorton, Kash Reynolds. Bennett Haley, Dougal Cameron.

Front L-R: Zoey Fisher, Aubrey Jackson, Lawson Wagner, Olive Ferenz, Arantza Gonzalez, Autumn Maley, Jude McElmurry, Teghan Steadman, Kinsley Fisher, Brooke Smith, Olivia Stewart, Valerie Mayfield, Cadence Wagner.

