

POLLEY ASSOCIATION



Message from the President

Katherine Goldberg

It is such a pleasure to convey so many exciting happenings from the last several months. The first two bits of news were relayed in the previous letter that Mrs. Shirley Grammer sent out in November. I have accepted the position of President of the Polley Association, and I couldn't be more thrilled to be a part of this family group at such an exciting time. And, of course, the most wonderful news in over two decades is that the Polley Mansion was bought by Keith and Robin Muschalek. Clean up and restoration on the home is well underway. Already the site is looking so much better, and you can learn more about the progress in Keith's note on page 3.

On February 18, 2016, the Polley Mansion was added to the Endangered Places list put together by Preservation Texas. This statewide organization is dedicated to the preservation and maintenance of historic structures in Texas, and this recognition for the Polley Mansion helps to bring the site to the attention of public and private donors and programs that seek to help preserve important historic properties.

The day before the Preservation Texas announcement, Joseph H. Polley, himself, was honored by The STAR (State of Texas Anniversary Remembrance) Day Foundation with an induction into the First Pioneers and Leaders of the State of Texas Hall of Honor. It was a beautiful day at the Wilson County Courthouse in Floresville, Texas, and a great day to honor the memory and legacy of this important figure in Texas history, and our great ancestor, Joseph H. Polley. Many thanks go out to Shirley Grammer and the Wilson County Historical Association for securing this honor and hosting this great event.



Polley Mansion circa 1964

We have come such a long way in just a few months, and there is more to look forward to on the horizon. Our last family reunion was in May 2008, and with so much to celebrate, we are planning the next reunion for sometime in 2017. Keith Muschalek has extended an offer to the Polley Association that we may tour the property as part of our gathering. So stay tuned for more information to come about the reunion!

When I visited Wilson County this past February for the Joseph H. Polley Hall of Honor Induction, I was fortunate enough to get to see the Polley property and visit the Polley family cemetery. As I sat in the cemetery at near sunset in the company of our ancestors, I looked up to the Polley Mansion, sitting just up the road. This grand home carries scars, but those scars tell stories. She has stood for over 165 years, bearing witness to the splendid heights of Texas pioneer society, and also the crushing lows of families broken apart and scattered. Through the years, she has been lovingly cared for, and also left for ruin. But a new day has dawned, and she is still there, scars and all, standing proud and ready for her revival. Within the Polley Association, we will support the restoration efforts as much as we are able, and we will continue to care for the hallowed ground at the Polley family cemetery which was so lovingly restored for our ancestors.

2016–17 Membership

Association dues remain at \$25.00 for the year, and we would appreciate dues by June 15th this year. You can mail your checks to:

Shirley Grammer
P.O. Box 234
La Vernia, Texas 78121

With the excitement over the restoration of the Polley Mansion, and renewed interest in the Polley family, we are looking to increase membership to be able to help spread the word about how people can donate their time, talents, and funds to assist with the restoration of Whitehall. If you know anyone who might be interested in the Polley family history, now is the time to invite them to join the Polley Association! We have exciting things planned on the horizon and it is a great time to be a part of this group.



Polley Family Cemetery – February 2016

WE'RE GOING DIGITAL!

To communicate a more easily about the upcoming reunion and new developments with the Polley Mansion, while keeping costs low, the board members have decided to send the Polley Association newsletter through email. So please send your email address to Katherine Goldberg at Emmlinn@live.com, so you don't miss out on future Polley news!



Polley Association Fund

The balance in the Polley Association account as of May 1, 2016 was \$3,149.58. We received a wonderful donation of \$500 from Melissa and Chris Lingwall of Cedar Hill, Texas. They asked that the money be directed toward an area of most need. The Officers agreed that the donation is most needed in the renovation projects at the Polley Mansion. So the donation was forwarded to the new 'Friends of the Polley Mansion' account that was set up specifically for these donations. A big thank you to the Lingwall's!

We continue to pay for the maintenance of the Polley family cemetery, which is currently in good shape.

Officers

President - Katherine Goldberg
Vice President - Melinda Kilian
Secretary - Pam O'Connor
Treasurer - Shirley Grammer

Message from Mr. Keith Muschalek

Owner of Polley Mansion

Dear Friends of the Polley,

As you may already know from previous correspondence and/or from our Facebook page, my wife, Robin and I, purchased the Polley Mansion on November 6, 2015 and we are proud to own this historic structure. But we cannot fully restore this iconic home to its original grandeur without generous support from people like you.

We have already started to restore the Polley Mansion and have cleaned out the junk and the trash that was inside and around the house. This past January, we completed the roof on the mansion to ensure the winter weather would not continue to leak into the house and destroy the interior. We placed gutters on the house to move the rain water away from the structure and ensure its continued survival. Our current project is to bring in new electrical feeds into the house to power the lights and eventually the new environmental control system. After the electrical feeds, we will complete the front porch and then move to the back porch. After the porches, we will take on the big project of windows and doors. We estimate that the 30 plus windows will cost about \$30,000 to fully renovate.

To help with fund raising, we formed the Texas non-profit corporation, called the "The Friends of Polley Mansion," a 501(c)3 organization. Therefore, your donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Please consult your tax preparer or accountant for further details.

For more information on how your donations will help to make a difference in the restoration of this iconic structure, we invite you to visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/PolleyMansion/>. You can also find information there on our upcoming events for this year and volunteer opportunities.

We look forward to your support.



Major trash removal



New roof



Grading the property



New sign letters



Wilson County Courthouse
February 17, 2016

Joseph Henry Polley's induction into the First Pioneers and Leaders of the State of Texas Hall of Honor Sarah Wood Pantin; Jimmie Cernosek; Cathy Schmidt; Marie Carvel and her husband, Steven Carvel; Wilson County Judge Richard L. "Dickie" Jackson and County Clerk Eva Martinez; State Rep. John Kuempel; Melinda Killian; Dennis Kulvicki of the State of Texas Anniversary Remembrance Day Foundation; Melanie Goeth; Katherine Goldberg; Shirley Grammer; and Keith Muschalek.



Wooldridge Park, Austin, Texas
February 18, 2016

*Preservation Texas Announcement of 2016 Most Endangered Places List
PT's Paul Kato, Melinda Killian (Polley Descendant), Keith Muschalek, Shirley Grammer,
Marvin Quinney, Aleen Quinney, PT's Evan Thompson.*