

## The Old San Jacinto County Jail

The Old San Jacinto County Jail is the only remaining public structure in the old town site of Coldspring. It was built in 1887 and doubled in size about 1911. At that time the upstairs cell block was installed as was a hangman's drop, never used, but still is in working order.

The mellow bricks for the walls were made from local clay on the site. The jail served continuously as a county detention facility until 1980 when a new modern law enforcement center was completed. At that time the San Jacinto County Commissioners Court and the San Jacinto County Historical Commission entered into a 40 year lease under which the Commission was authorized to restore the building and use it as a Historical County Museum. The well proportioned building has corbelled arches and brick friezes. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Registered Texas Landmark. Restoration plans include a new roof, weatherization, stabilization, making the lower floor into an exhibit and gift shop spaces and using the cell block upstairs for show, storage and work. Project architects of Raiford Stripling Associates of San Augustine, its senior partner was recently called the Dean of Texas, Restoration Architecture. Word was received that the Commissions 1980 Grant Application to the Economic Development Administration for restoration was approved. \$224,000 in tax dollars will flow back into the county because of this grant; however it must be matched by \$44,800. (20% of grant in local funds). The proceeds from the book this article is taken from, "A History of San Jacinto County, Texas, Dim Trails and Blurred Footprints" was a part of that matching requirement.

