

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

RECEIVED 2280  
OMB No. 1024-0018

AUG - 7 2015

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Covert Park at Mount Bonnell  
Other name/site number: Mount Bonnell  
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 3800 Mount Bonnell Road  
City or town: Austin State: Texas County: Travis  
Not for publication:  Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:  
 national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer Date 8/3/15  
Signature of certifying official / title  
Texas Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register
- other, explain:

Joe Eason H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

9-17-15  
Date of Action

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
1	0	sites
1	1	structures
1	0	objects
<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>total</b>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** RECREATION AND CULTURE / outdoor recreation, monument/marker  
 LANDSCAPE / park, natural feature

**Current Functions:** RECREATION AND CULTURE / outdoor recreation, monument/marker  
 LANDSCAPE / park, natural feature, conservation area

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** OTHER: NPS Rustic

**Principal Exterior Materials:** STONE/limestone

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 6 through 7)

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>A</b>	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>B</b>	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>C</b>	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>D</b>	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations:** NA

**Areas of Significance:** Entertainment/Recreation

**Period of Significance:** 1838-1965

**Significant Dates:** 1838, 1938

**Significant Person** (only if criterion b is marked): N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion d is marked): N/A

**Architect/Builder:** Travis County; City of Austin

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 8 through 11)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheet 12)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government (*City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department; Austin History Center*)
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): NA

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** approximately 5.19 acres

### Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

Lat: 30.321712° Long: -97.773401°

**Verbal Boundary Description:** Legal description from Travis County Central Appraisal District:

Property ID: 122288

Legal Description: ABS 744 SUR 1 SILSBEE A ACR 5.19

Geographic ID: 0125070102

**Boundary Justification:** The nomination includes all the area included in official boundary of Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, owned by the City of Austin.

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Kim McKnight, M.S.H.P.

Organization: City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department

Street & number: 919 W. 28 ½ Street

City or Town: Austin

State: Texas

Zip Code: 78705

Email: kim.mcknight@austintexas.gov

Telephone: (512) 974-9478

Date: January 31, 2015

## Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see continuation sheets Map 13 through 15)

**Additional items** (see continuation sheets Figure 16 through 34)

**Photographs** (see continuation sheets Photo 35 through 48)



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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**Photographs**

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell  
Austin, Travis County, Texas  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, July 2015

Photo 1  
Staircase at street level  
Camera facing west

Photo 2  
Staircase railing, contemporary Covert marker, Covert  
Park interpretive marker, Official Texas Historical  
Marker (1969)  
Camera facing east

Photo 3  
Staircase, looking up from street level  
Camera facing west

Photo 4  
Staircase, looking down from summit  
Camera facing east

Photo 5  
Overlook at the summit, with shade arbor and Covert  
Monument  
Camera facing west

Photo 6  
Historic Covert Monument  
Camera facing west

Photo 7  
Informational kiosk and north trail  
Camera facing north

Photo 8  
Picnic table and benches (South Picnic Unit #2)  
Camera facing south, to city skyline

Photo 9  
Picnic table and benches (South Picnic Unit #1)  
Camera facing south, to city skyline

Photo 10  
Picnic table and benches (North Picnic Unit) at end of  
north trail  
Camera facing south

Photo 11  
Trail pylons and north trail  
Camera facing north

Photo 12  
Trail pylons along north trail  
Camera facing southwest

Photo 13  
Trail pylons along north trail  
Camera facing south

Photo 14  
Stone wall on north trail  
Camera facing west

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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## Description

Mount Bonnell is a rustic 785-foot-high promontory along the eastern shore of Lake Austin, a water reservoir formed along a segment of the Colorado River behind Tom Miller Dam. Covert Park at Mount Bonnell is a 5.1 acre linear city park that features a prominent overlook which is one of the most visited sites in Austin. The apex of the overlook is a craggy limestone outcropping surrounded by a forested area of live oak, ash juniper, persimmon and mountain laurel that spans the slope between Mount Bonnell Road and the trails at the top of the park. The character of the overall site is naturalistic, with rustic stone structures, including a staircase, an arbor and plaza, and three picnic tables. The park retains a good degree of integrity.

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Covert Park at Mount Bonnell is approximately 3.5 miles northwest of the Texas Capitol in central Austin. The main entrance to the park is off Mount Bonnell Road, which forms the eastern boundary of the park. From a parking area along Mount Bonnell Road, one enters the park on foot via a long staircase with approximately 100 limestone steps (Photo 1) ascending to the plaza and overlook. A low-stepped retaining wall runs along the south edge of the steps and a simple metal railing, centered in the middle up the steps, runs all the way to the top, approximately 200 feet from the base (Photo 2). The flagstone stairs are historic, but the retaining wall was added in the early 1980s. The historic staircase was repaired and repointed in 1993. Just north of the base of the steps is a Texas Historical Commission subject marker (1969) titled "Mount Bonnell," which relates the history of the site (Photo 3). Another cast aluminum marker to the right of the stairs titled "Covert Park" is of unclear provenance or date and explains the donation of land by Frank Covert, Sr. to Travis County in the 1930s (Photo 4). Nearby, red granite monument erected in 2014 commemorates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Covert family's donation of park land in the late 1930s (Photo 5).

At the summit of the step is a clearing. The overlook is paved in limestone flagstone and a low seating wall marks the western edge of the overlook (Photo 6). A shade arbor is located above the seat wall and is constructed of double columns with limestone block veneer that are topped with wooden beams (Photo 7). The hardscaping and the arbor were designed in 1983 and constructed shortly thereafter. At the center of the flagstone terrace is a grassy circle in which sits the historic Covert Monument, a rustic, hand-carved limestone tablet from 1938 that commemorates the dedication and donation of Mount Bonnell as a Travis County public park by Frank Covert, Sr. (Photo 8). Approximately 15 feet north of the top of the steps is an informational kiosk that was constructed in 2012 (Photo 9). The two-sided kiosk has a limestone veneer base with a Lueder stone cap stone, two steel columns that hold an informational panel and a simple roof of sheet metal.

From the overlook, one may view downtown Austin to the left (southeast), and the edge of the Texas Hill Country to the west. Although the river has been impounded and the private property in the immediate vicinity has been developed with residences, the landscape is largely green. The vantage point often seen in historic photos just below the promontory (Figures 3, 7, 8 and 11) is not safe for visitors and is therefore restricted.

A variety of rustic stone structures similar in style to those built through New Deal programs are found throughout the park. From the overlook, twin trails descend to the south approximately 100 feet. At the terminus of each trail is an historic square stone picnic table with fixed stone benches (Photo 10). Another trail descends to the north from the overlook. Approximately 275 feet down are five stone veneer trail pylons (Photo 11) and a historic rubble stone wall (Photo 12). At the base of the trail, approximately 875 feet from the summit, is another square stone picnic unit (Photo 13). The trail switches back to the south and ends 100 feet from the picnic unit on Mount Bonnell Road, approximately 800 feet north of the main entrance.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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**Table of Park Resources**

<b>Property</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Status</b>
Park	NA	site	C
Staircase	c.1940	structure	C
Paved overlook and arbor	c.1983	structure	NC
Covert Monument	1938	object	C
North picnic unit	c.1940	structure	Historic; not counted separately from the site
South picnic unit #1	c.1940	structure	Historic; not counted separately from the site
South picnic unit #2	c.1940	structure	Historic; not counted separately from the site
Stone wall	c.1940	structure	Historic; not counted separately from the site
Five trail pylons	c.1940	structure	Historic; not counted separately from the site
Official Texas Historical Subject Marker	1969	object	Not historic; not counted separately from the site
Covert Park Interpretive Marker	Not determined, but likely after 1972	object	Not historic; not counted separately from the site
Covert Monument (2014)	2014	object	Not historic; not counted separately from the site
Informational kiosk	2012	object	Not historic; not counted separately from the site

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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## Statement of Significance

Mount Bonnell, a 785-foot-high promontory along the eastern shore of Lake Austin in is among the most prominent natural and historical landmarks in Austin, Texas. Covert Park Mount Bonnell is a 5.19 acre linear city park with a prominent overlook that has served as a popular attraction since the 1830s. The park is nominated to the National Register at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/Recreation for its use as a park and conservation area. The high rock outcropping retains a high level of historic integrity and continues to serve as a scenic overlook, a public park, and a top sightseeing destination in the city. Each year, thousands of visitors from all over the world ascend the steps of Mount Bonnell to take in sweeping panoramic views of Lake Austin and the western hills of Austin.

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### Mount Bonnell in the Nineteenth Century

Before Anglo settlement in Central Texas in the 1830s, the 785-foot-high promontory of Mount Bonnell was traversed by Native American tribes who lived in the area and may have recognized its utility as a defensive site due to its great height and stretching views. The first documented reference to the rugged high outcropping appears in the writings of George W. Bonnell, journalist and soldier, who documented his observations while traveling through Texas in 1838.<sup>1</sup>

The 1969 Official Texas Historical Marker at the base of the overlook references Mount Bonnell's early connection to the well-known Texas frontiersman and Texas Ranger, William A.A. "Bigfoot" Wallace, who came to Texas in 1837 shortly after the Texas Revolution. At that time, central Texas had a large presence of Native American tribes and tensions and conflict between the native residents and Anglo-American settlers were very high. Wallace, who arrived in Austin in 1839, was lauded locally for killing a Native American at Mount Bonnell and in 1839 he recuperated in a cave at Mt. Bonnell in after contracting "flux," which was most likely cholera.<sup>2</sup> Years after Bigfoot Wallace's refuge in the cave on Mount Bonnell, when asked why he had chosen the cave as a refuge, he responded "the cave was right on the old Indian trail leading down to Austin, and I thought I would be able to keep my hand in by 'upping' one now and then; and besides, the cave was in the best hunting ground for bear in all this country..<sup>3</sup>

Julia Lee Sinks, author and historian, settled in Austin in the early days of the Republic of Texas era, arriving in the spring of 1840. She lived on West Pecan Street, now called 6<sup>th</sup> Street and wrote:

Our home was on the beaten track of the Indians into town from the pass of Mount Bonnell. The knolls beyond the quarry branch were interspersed with timber, and sometimes though not often, we would see galloping past the open spaces beyond the blanketed Indian. The path along the quarry branch, secluded as it was, became their main inlet to the town. It was a sheltered road, never traveled at night by whites, so the Indians claimed right of way, and all full moons brought moccasin tracks in abundance.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>In 1840 George Bonnell identified Mount Bonnell by name in "*Topographical Description of Texas*" (Austin: Clark, Wing, & Brown), reproduced by Texian Press in 1964 (Bonnell's description of the property appears on page 66). A handwritten document at the Newberry Library entitled "Bonnell's Observations" contains the following entry for July 25, 1838, "...ascended to the summit of a high hill. My companions called it 'Mount Bonnell,' the Colorado appearing but an inconsiderable Stream." Later in the same entry, the summit of Mount Bonnell is described as "composed of a coralline-looking rock, oyster & other marine shells." ("Bonnell's Observations [manuscript]: 1838-1839, 1844, Edward E. Ayer Manuscript Collection, Ayer MS 95. Newberry Library, Chicago, IL).

<sup>2</sup>"Mount Bonnell," Official Texas Historical Commission subject marker, 1969.

<sup>3</sup>Wilbarger, J.W. (1889). *Indian Depredations in Texas*. Austin, TX: Hutchings Print House. p. 665.

([http://archive.org/stream/indiandepredatio00wilb/indiandepredatio00wilb\\_djvu.txt](http://archive.org/stream/indiandepredatio00wilb/indiandepredatio00wilb_djvu.txt)), accessed February 15, 2015.

<sup>4</sup>Kerr, Jeffrey, and Ray Spivey. *The Republic of Austin. AUSTIN, TEXAS: WATERLOO*, 2010. Kerr is quoting materials from the Julia Lee Sinks Papers, 1817, [ca. 1840]-1904, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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The land surrounding the Mount Bonnell park site was first patented to Albert Sillsbe on May 24, 1839. In the mid-nineteenth century, a group of 130 Mormons led by pioneer Lyman Wight, settled in Austin in 1846 on the east side of the Colorado River near Mount Bonnell. Later that fall, community members constructed a gristmill, one of the first mills in Austin on the Colorado River, at the base of Mount Bonnell, but the mill was destroyed in a flood in 1848.<sup>5</sup>

Mount Bonnell's popularity as a sightseeing location began to rise in the mid-nineteenth century. In *History of Texas: From Its History and Settlement* (1874), J.M. Morphis wrote that the Texans who chose Austin as the capital of the new republic "threw out the banner of the Lone Star beyond the outer wall of civilization among the hills overlooked by Mount Bonnel [sic], in full view of Barton's lovely springs and the beautiful river and fertile valley of the Colorado and that banner they have followed and defended."<sup>6</sup> Morphis also describes a visit to Mount Bonnell by General Sam Houston, the first president of the Republic of Texas:

Several years ago, General Sam Houston and Judge Williamson familiarly known in Texas as "Three-legged Willie," together ascended Mount Bonnell, which overlooks Austin and all the surrounding country for miles...General Houston, filled with admiration at the transcendent loveliness and inspiring grandeur of the scenery, slapped his companion on the shoulder and exclaimed: "Pon my soul, Williamson, this must be the very identical spot where the devil took our Savior to show and tempt Him with the riches and beauties of the world!" "Yes, general," responded Judge Williamson; "and if Jesus Christ had been fallible, He would have accepted his satanic majesty's proposition!"<sup>7</sup>

Morphis further provides a description of Austin and Mount Bonnell that was submitted to *Turf, Field and Farm*, a leading newspaper published from 1865-1903 that was based in New York City:

[Y]ou gradually ascend from the valley, until, at the end of two or three miles, you attain a considerable elevation, probably eight hundred feet or more above the level of the gulf, and reach the summit of a bold prairie ridge extending with occasional broken spurs three or four miles to your right and left. From this point, looking toward the north, the spires and domes of the lovely capital of Texas, twelve miles distant, shimmer in the sunlight; immediately beyond them Mount Bonnell, with its summit wreathed in a light mist, looks down upon the city, while at the mountain's base the crystal waters of the Colorado leap over the Mormon Falls and hurry on to Matagorda Bay.<sup>8</sup>

In October 1865, Major General George Armstrong Custer established the headquarters of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division of the Calvary in Austin. During his five-months in Austin, Custer and his wife, Libbie, along with other officers and their families, frequently had picnics atop Mount Bonnell. In her memoir, Libbie Custer, who mistakenly references Mount Bonnell as Mount Brunnel, writes:

In our daily rides we found the country about Austin delightful. The roads were smooth and the surface rolling. Indeed, there was one high hill, called Mount Brunnel, where we had picnics and

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<sup>5</sup> Martin Donell Kohout, "WIGHT, LYMAN," Handbook of Texas Online (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fwi05>), accessed February 16, 2015. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>6</sup> J.M. Morphis, J.M., *History of Texas: From Its Discovery and Settlement, with a Description of Its Principal Cities and Counties, and the Agricultural, Mineral, and Material Resources of the State*, New York: United States Publishing Company, 1874, p. 420.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> J.M. Morphis, *History of Texas: From Its Discovery and Settlement, with a Description of Its Principal Cities and Counties, and the Agricultural, Mineral, and Material Resources of the State*, New York: United States publishing Company, 1874.

## Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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enjoyed the fine view, far and near, taking one of the bands of the regular regiments from the North that joined us soon after our arrival. Mount Brunnel was so steep we had to dismount and climb a part of the distance. The band played the "Anvil Chorus," and the sound descended through the valley grandly. The river, filled with sand-bars and ugly on close examination, looked like a silver ribbon. At that height, the ripened cotton, at certain seasons of the year, looked like fields of foam. The thermometer was over eighty before we left the lowlands; but at the altitude to which we climbed the air was cool.<sup>9</sup>

Mount Bonnell is also cited as an early location for May Pole celebrations in the 1850s and 1860s. Like many other recreational sites in Austin, such as Deep Eddy and the former Lake McDonald, Mt. Bonnell was sometimes the site of entertainment and performances. The 1969 Official Texas Historical Marker references a stunt in 1898, when Miss Hazel Keyes, trailed by her monkey "Miss Jennie Yan Yan," slid down a cable stretched from the top of Mount Bonnell to south bank of then Lake McDonald below.<sup>10</sup> The landmark has been the subject of many legends over the decades, and local lore also named the summit "Antonette's Leap" in memory of a woman who allegedly jumped to her death to escape Indians who had just killed her fiancé.<sup>11</sup> The earliest mention of the legend can be found in Morphis' *History of Texas: From Its History and Settlement*; it is also recounted in J. Frank Dobie's *The Legends of Texas: Pirates' Gold and Other Tales*.

### Twentieth-Century Developments

Covert Park has been an official public park since 1939 when the estate of Frank M. Covert, Sr. donated a major portion current park area to Travis County. In the late 1930s a hand-carved rustic limestone boulder was installed as a monument honoring Covert's gift to the county. The monument, though damaged, is among the oldest manmade features on the site. Improvements made under the stewardship of the Travis County park system included the limestone steps, retaining walls, picnic tables and trails. An additional conveyance of land from the Barrow family to Travis County was made in 1957, expanding the park. Newspaper accounts make reference to Sunday sunrise services held at the site in the 1930s and 1940s and currently, the Easter Sunrise Service draws hundreds of people each year. An article in the February 1967 edition of the University of Texas *Alcade* magazine noted the popularity of Mount Bonnell with students:

Generation upon generation of University men have taken their girls up those stone steps. An article in the *Daily Texan* (The University of Texas daily newspaper), which appeared in 1963, said, 'Because of the over-crowded conditions at Mount Bonnell, they have been forced to move to different locations to carry on in the grand manner of the University.' The mountain is of such significance to UT students through the years that it is constantly the subjects of skits in campus shows and jokes in publications."<sup>12</sup>

Travis County conveyed the entire park to the City of Austin in 1972. In 1983, the city made its first major improvements to the site. These improvements consisted primarily of a stone arbor, new retaining walls, and paving around the historic monument, and enhance the visitor experience without detracting from the characteristics that have made the site a popular attraction for over 175 years. A perimeter fence was constructed in 1995. In 2006, Mount

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<sup>9</sup> Elizabeth B. Custer, *Tenting on the Plains or General Custer in Kansas and Texas*, New York: Harper & Brothers Publisher, 1895.

<sup>10</sup> Toni Lynn Cooney, "Mount Bonnell," the *Alcade*, February, 1967.

<sup>11</sup> Texas Folklore Society. *Legends of Texas*. Dallas, Texas. UNT Digital Library. <http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc67651/>. Accessed February 16, 2015.

<sup>12</sup> Toni Lynn Cooney, "Mount Bonnell," the *Alcade*, February, 1967.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Bonnell became part of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve, which was established to preserve the habitat of federally-listed endangered species and threatened species, including the Bracted Twistflower (*Streptanthus bracteatus*).

**Summary**

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell has long-served as one of the city's most popular destinations for residents and visitors and retains a high level of physical integrity, having maintained its rustic feel. All physical improvements have been designed to accommodate visitors without compromising the primitive feel of the site. Lacking lights and utilities, the site is rugged and difficult to access, which has helped preserve the rustic feel. The site is not programmed and interpretation takes the form of historic markers and interpretive kiosks. The site remains a popular location for photographers, weddings, and memorials. For its well-documented significance as a recreational site, gathering place, and tourist attraction without peer in the City of Austin, Covert Park at Mount Bonnell is nominated to the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/Recreation at the local level of significance.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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**Bibliography**

- Bonnell, George. *Bonnell's Observations* [manuscript]: 1838-1839. 1844. 1 v. (24 p.); 26 cm. Edward E. Ayer Manuscript Collection (Newberry Library) Newberry Library. Manuscript. Ayer MS 95. Newberry Library, Chicago IL.
- Bonnell, George W. *Topographical Description of Texas*. Austin: Clark, Wing, & Brown, 1840.
- . *Topographical Description of Texas* (reprint). Waco, Tex.: Texian Press, 1964.
- Cooney, Toni Lynn. "Mount Bonnell." *The Alcade*, University of Texas alumni magazine. February, 1967.
- Custer, Elizabeth B. *Tenting on the Plains or General Custer in Kansas and Texas*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publisher, 1895.
- Kerr, Jeffrey, and Ray Spivey. *The Republic of Austin. AUSTIN, TEXAS: WATERLOO, 2010*. Austin: Waterloo Press, 2010. Kerr is quoting materials from the Julia Lee Sinks Papers, 1817, [ca. 1840]-1904,
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- Martin Donell Kohout, "WIGHT, LYMAN," Handbook of Texas Online (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fwi05>), accessed February 16, 2015. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.
- Morris, J.M., *History of Texas: From Its Discovery and Settlement, with a Description of Its Principal Cities and Counties, and the Agricultural, Mineral, and Material Resources of the State*, New York: United States Publishing Company, 1874.
- "Mount Bonnell." Official Texas Historical Commission subject marker (1969), with supplemental file at the Texas Historical Commission, Austin.
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- Wilbarger, J.W. (1889). *Indian Depredations in Texas*. Austin, TX: Hutchings Print House. p. 665. ([http://archive.org/stream/indiandepredatio00wilb/indiandepredatio00wilb\\_djvu.txt](http://archive.org/stream/indiandepredatio00wilb/indiandepredatio00wilb_djvu.txt)), accessed February 15, 2015.



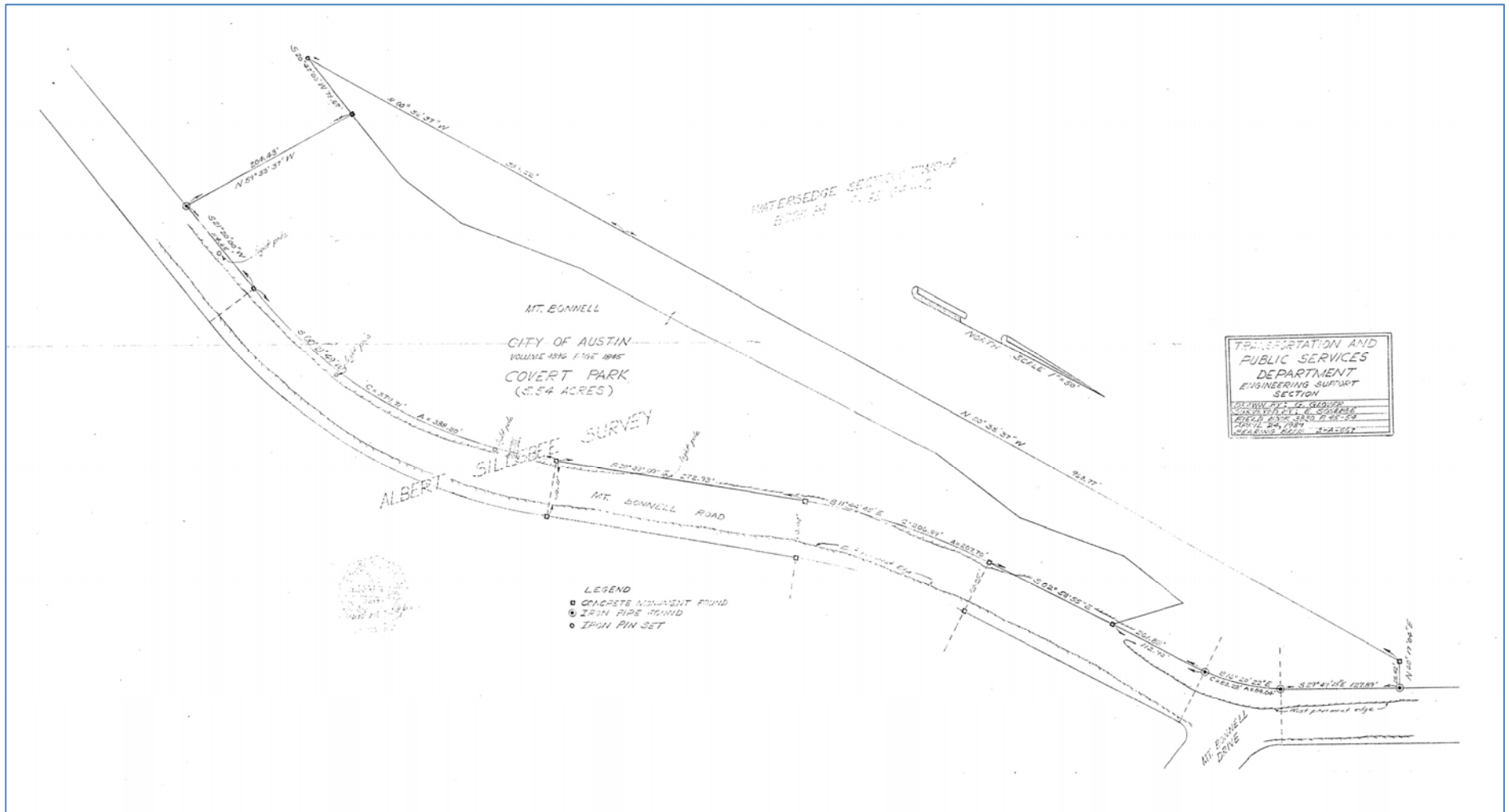
Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Geographic Data



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Survey map, drawn 1984.









Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

Site Plan with features noted, 2014.



Legend

-  Land Base Lot Properties
-  Streets and Bridges
-  Parking Lots
-  City of Austin Parks

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries. This product has been produced by the Parks and Recreation Department for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



**Mt. Bonnell at Covert Park: Historic Features**

20 November 2014 Mcknightki



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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**Historic Photographs**

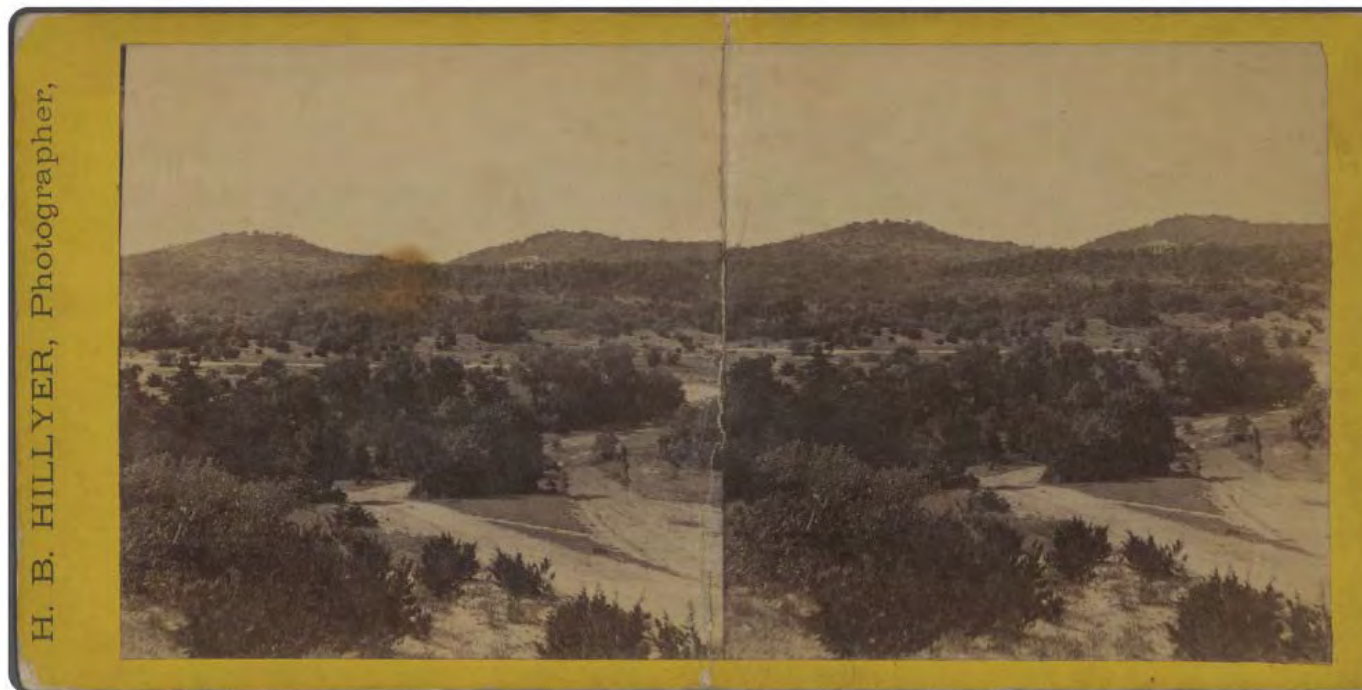


Figure 1: ca. 1870; "No. 23 Mt. Bonnell from 1 mile this side."

H. B. Hillyer, Photographer; Lawrence T. Jones III Texas photography collection; Southern Methodist University, Central University Libraries, DeGolyer Library.



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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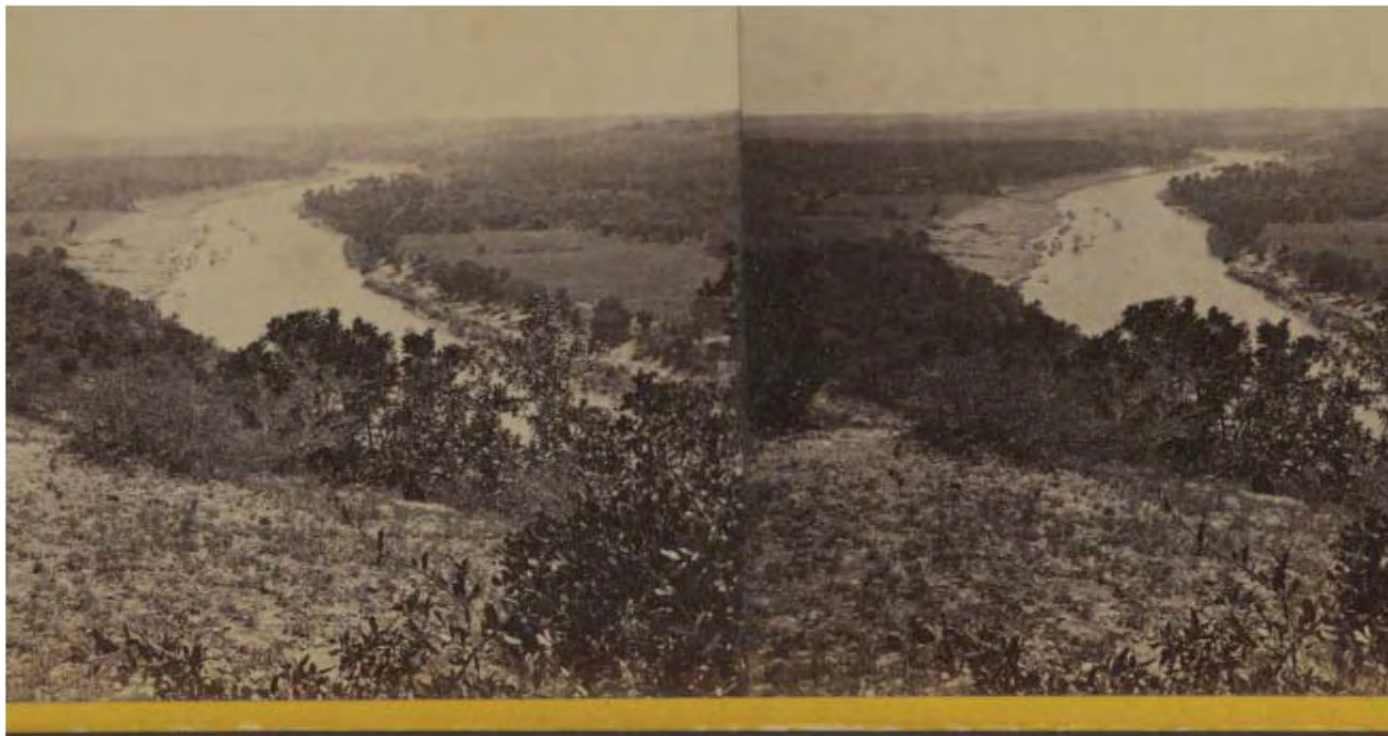


Figure 2: ca. 1868; “View down the River from Mt. Bonnell 4 miles above Austin”

H. B. Hillyer, Photographer; Lawrence T. Jones III Texas photography collection; Southern Methodist University, Central University Libraries, DeGolyer Library.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Figure 3: ca. 1889 photo of outcrop at Mount Bonnell

Lawrence T. Jones III Texas photography collection; Southern Methodist University, Central University Libraries, DeGolyer Library.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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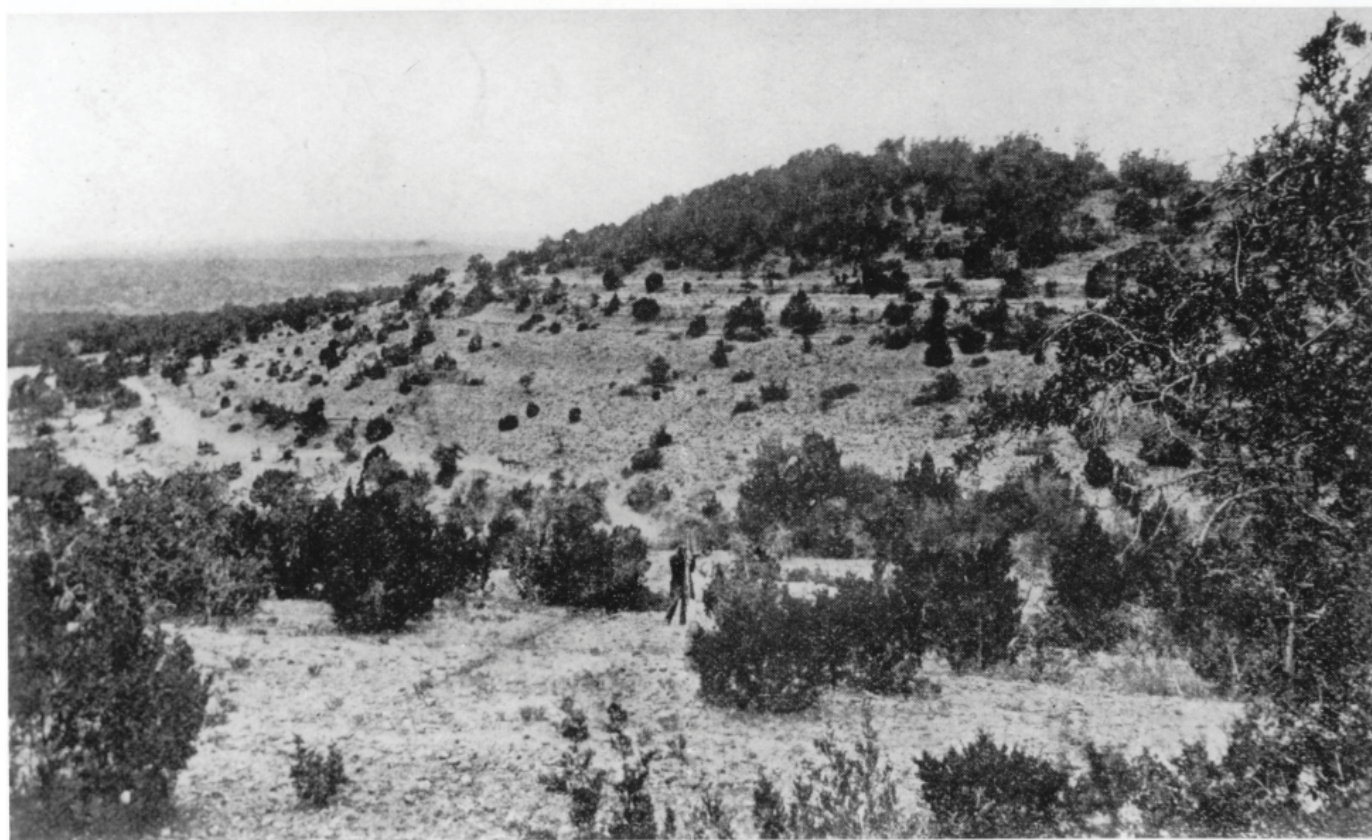
Figure 4: ca. 1889; "Mount Bonnell and Colorado River Austin, Texas"

Lawrence T. Jones III Texas photography collection; Southern Methodist University, Central University Libraries, DeGolyer Library.



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Mount Bonnell, Austin, Texas

Figure 5: Mount Bonnell; donor Mr. Wilbur George Allen, PICA 05434, Austin History Center files.



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Figure 6: Mt. Bonnell, unknown date, Walter E. Long Collection, PICA 05427, Austin History Center.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Fig. 7: Mt. Bonnell, unknown date, Walter E. Long Collection, PICA 05429, Austin History Center.



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Fig. 8: Mt. Bonnell, unknown date, Mr. and Mrs. George C. Hawley, PICA 05432, Austin History Center.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Fig. 9: Mt. Bonnell, "Road to Mt. Bonnell," unknown date, PICA 05435, Austin History Center.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Fig. 10: Mt. Bonnell, "Mt. Bonnell from Mt. Barker," 1935, Walter E. Long Collection, PICA 16299, Austin History Center.



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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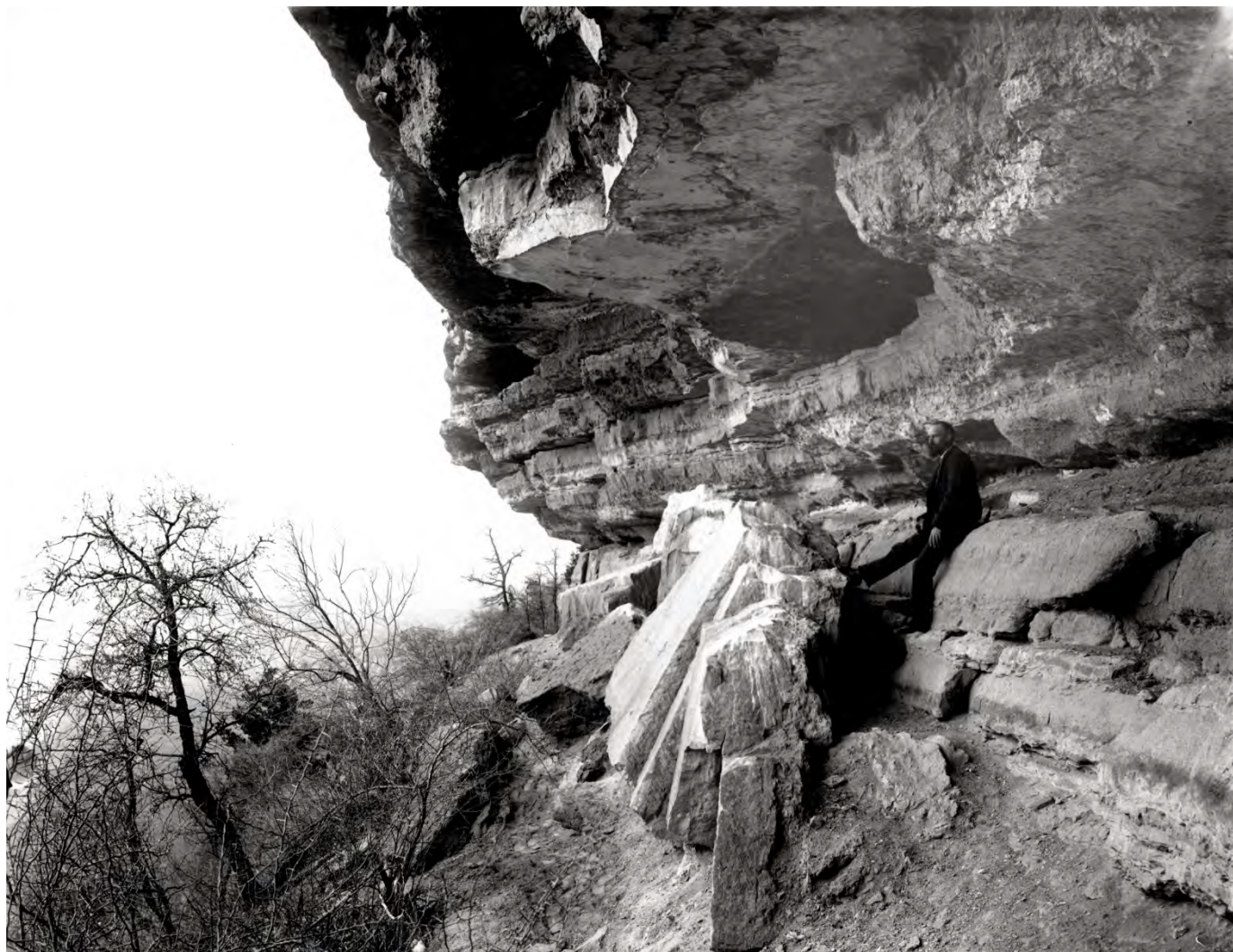


Fig. 11: Mt. Bonnell, unknown date, Walter E. Long Collection, PICA 20591, Austin History Center.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Fig. 12: Mt. Bonnell, unknown date, PICA 20592, Austin History Center.



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Fig. 13: Mt. Bonnell, unknown date, Walter E. Long Collection, PICA 20594, Austin History Center.



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Fig. 14: 1917 Postcard of Mt. Bonnell.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Figure 15: View of Mt. Bonnell from Laguna Gloria, 1943. Douglass, Neal. Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Austin, Texas.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Fig. 16: Mount Bonnell at Covert Park, 1961-62.



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Fig. 17: Historic photo of Mount Bonnell at Covert Park monument.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Fig. 18: Mt. Bonnell , 2000, Austin Parks and Recreation Department files.

Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Fig. 19: Mt. Bonnell, 2001, Austin Parks and Recreation Department files.



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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**Photographs**

All photographs by Gregory Smith, July 2015

Photo 1  
Staircase at street level  
Camera facing west





Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 2

Staircase railing, contemporary Covert marker, Covert Park interpretive marker, Official Texas Historical Marker (1969)

Camera facing east





Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 3  
Staircase, looking up from street level  
Camera facing west





Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 4  
Staircase, looking down from summit  
Camera facing east



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 5  
Overlook at the summit, with shade arbor and Covert Monument  
Camera facing west





Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 6  
Historic Covert Monument  
Camera facing west

The historic Covert Monument commemorates the donation of land from Frank Covert to Travis County in 1938. The monument material is a rustic local limestone and the monument is approximately three feet in width, three feet in height and two feet deep. Of note is the name “Stasswender,” which is carved below and to the right of the primary text. Stasswender is a local monument company. The pieces that have become separated from the main monument are in storage in Parks and Recreation Department maintenance facility and will be restored through the grant-funded work. The monument sits on a historic star shaped concrete base with a flagstone overlay.



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 7  
Informational kiosk and north trail  
Camera facing north





Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 8  
Picnic table and benches (South Picnic Unit #2)  
Camera facing south, to city skyline

The historic picnic units are estimated to date to the 1940s.



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 9

Picnic table and benches (South Picnic Unit #1)

Camera facing south, to city skyline

The historic picnic units are estimated to date to the 1940s.





Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 10  
Picnic table and benches (North Picnic Unit) at end of north trail  
Camera facing south

The historic picnic units are estimated to date to the 1940s.





Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 11  
Trail pylons and north trail  
Camera facing north



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 12  
Trail pylons along north trail  
Camera facing southwest





Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 13  
Trail pylons along north trail  
Camera facing south



Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Photo 14  
Stone wall on north trail  
Camera facing west



*-fin-*



1939 - 2014  
COVERT PARK  
COMMEMORATING THE  
75th ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE COVERT FAMILY GIFT OF  
MOUNT BONNELL  
TO THE PEOPLE OF TRAVIS COUNTY IN MEMORY OF  
FRANK M. COVERT, SR.

HISTORY OF COVERT PARK AT MOUNT BONNELL

COVERT PARK, QUINCY, TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS  
WAS DONATED TO THE CITY OF QUINCY,  
TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS, BY FRANK M. COVERT, SR.,  
ON FEBRUARY 15, 1939. THE CITY OF QUINCY,  
TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS, HAS MAINTAINED AND  
PRESERVED THE PARK AS A PUBLIC RECREATION  
AREA SINCE THAT TIME. THE PEOPLE  
OF QUINCY, TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS, WILL  
ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL TO THE COVERT FAMILY.



285 FEET  
ABOVE SEA LEVEL  
Mt. Bonnell  
Peak

1939 ~ 2014  
**COVERT PARK**  
COMMEMORATING THE  
75th ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE COVERT FAMILY GIFT OF  
**MOUNT BONNELL**  
TO THE PEOPLE OF TRAVIS COUNTY, IN MEMORY OF  
**FRANK M. COVERT, SR.**

Colorado River

**HISTORY OF COVERT PARK AT MOUNT BONNELL**

1939 PARK GIVEN TO TRAVIS COUNTY  
1972 PARK TRANSFERRED TO CITY OF AUSTIN  
1990 DESIGNATED AS A HISTORIC LANDMARK  
1996 DESIGNATED AS A NATURE PRESERVE  
REDEDICATED TO THE ENJOYMENT OF THE PEOPLE  
OF AUSTIN AND VISITORS FROM AROUND THE WORLD BY  
THE COVERT FAMILY

COVERT PARK  
1939-2014  
COMMEMORATING THE  
75th ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE COVERT FAMILY GIFT OF  
MOUNT BONNELL  
TO THE PEOPLE OF TRAVIS COUNTY, IN MEMORY OF  
FRANK M. COVERT, SR.

COVERT PARK  
1939-2014  
COMMEMORATING THE  
75th ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE COVERT FAMILY GIFT OF  
MOUNT BONNELL  
TO THE PEOPLE OF TRAVIS COUNTY, IN MEMORY OF  
FRANK M. COVERT, SR.













MOUNT BONNELL  
Dedicated 1932, 1935 by  
FRANK M. COVERT, SR.  
1935  
1935  
1935



MOUNT BONNELL

DEDICATED AS A PARK BY

FRANK M. COVERT SR.

TO TRAVIS COUNTY

JULY 5, 1938

WARREN S. FREEMAN COMR. PREG. NO. 2

































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Covert Park at Mount Bonnell

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Travis

DATE RECEIVED: 8/07/15      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/28/15  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/14/15      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/22/15  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000619

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    9-17-15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

*real places telling real stories*

**RECEIVED 2280**

**AUG - 7 2015**

**Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service**

**TO:** Edson Beall  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)  
Washington , DC 20005

**FROM:** Gregory Smith  
National Register Coordinator  
Texas Historical Commission

**RE:** Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas

**DATE:** August 3, 2015

The following materials are submitted:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original National Register of Historic Places form on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the National Register of Historic Places nomination for Covert Park at Mount Bonnell, Austin, Travis County, Texas.
	Resubmitted nomination.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CD with TIFF photograph files, Amended PDF, and KMZ file
	Correspondence

**COMMENTS:**

- SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
- The enclosed owner objections (do ) (do not ) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other:

