

**HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**May 14<sup>th</sup> 2015**

**Members Present:** Tom Speir, Richard Magrill, Rose Mary Magrill, Jean Birmingham, Marty Vaughan, Thomas Richardson, Marcia Jones, and Robert Wood.

**Visitor Present:** Debbie Gullett.

I. Call to Order

At the request of Jennifer Larned, chair, Tom Speir, as acting chair, called the meeting to order on Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 1:35 p.m. at the Marshall Visual Arts Center.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of February 12<sup>th</sup> were approved as distributed.

III. Treasurer's Report

Tom Speir reported that there was \$2,603.66 in the bank account, \$5,502.28 in the savings account, and \$3,219.12 in the Greenwood Cemetery account. Tom noted that Deon Behrman, treasurer, wishes to be relieved of his duties as soon as a replacement can be found. Rose Mary Magrill questioned whether the signature cards had been updated since she was treasurer and Margaret Agnor was chair.

IV. The standing committee reports are as follows:

A. Archaeology

Tom Speir and Thomas Richardson reported that they had not made any recent visits to cemeteries. The Henderson School House Road Cemetery remains a current focus of investigation.

The Texas Historical Commission wants to compile a list of the Rosenwald Schools throughout the state and are beginning their efforts by asking our commission to work on the project. Austin has supplied the names of the schools in our county but wants us to report the locations. Jean Birmingham attended a Rosewald school but not in our county. There was discussion of using a list from Gail Beil. It is on a floppy. Richard Magrill reported he could retrieve items from floppies. There was the suggestion that one of the schools may be in Karnack and that several of the schools may have been sited in connection with churches.

Tom reported that there was a pottery training session at the Gregg County Historical Museum on May 9<sup>th</sup> 2015. The session was for Archeological Stewards. Tom attended.

An Indian artifact show was scheduled in Hallsville that same day by a private citizen on private property, a perfectly legal activity. Tom did not attend but mentioned the event because it was being held in our county.

#### B. Archives

No report.

#### C. Cemeteries

Thomas Richardson thinks he has located the Clark Cemetery, but still needs to check it out. Recently he did a presentation on the Hallsville churches of his childhood. Information regarding some of them will be included in his Marshall New Messenger column this week.

#### D. Education

Tom Speir reviewed educational efforts last year and plans for this fall. We provided pamphlets last year to schools in the Marshall ISD. The Smithsonian traveling exhibit provided a focus and all historic venues reported increased traffic. Robert Wood reported that school attendance at the depot went “off the charts.” This year, we plan to repeat the effort to contact the Marshall ISD and will circulate materials to other ISDs in the county.

#### E. Historical Markers

Tom Speir noted that Jennifer Larned had previously reported that the marker for Pemberton High School has been received and that the commission is still waiting on the markers for Messrs. Tolson and Dogan at Wiley. The Piney Cemetery marker has been received but no dedication date has been set. Anyone with information regarding markers was asked to share it since contacting Jennifer is difficult due to her declining health. We will need to get new marker applications done this summer. Tom will try to contact Jack and Nancy Canson to see if Jennifer has talked with them about the application for the free (state pays) marker on the subject of Boogie Woogie.

#### F. History Museum

Jean Birmingham reported that we have a grant of \$150K but need to raise matching funds by June 1. (This money is for the work on the military exhibits in Memorial City Hall.) Tom Speir is identifying items at the museum in its Native American collection in order for the museum to be compliant for NAGPRA purposes. On April 21<sup>st</sup> groups of 2<sup>nd</sup> graders were taken on tours of historic sites including the museum, the Michelson and the Depot. There were about eighty in all. Tom Speir and Thomas Richardson reminded the commission of the work of “Texas Rural News.”

#### G. Oral History

No report.

#### H. Preservation

Robert Wood reported that Deb and Rob Sorich, owners of Central Perks in the Weisman Center will very shortly close the deal on their purchase of the old Ginnocchio Hotel and proceed with their plans to open a “high end” restaurant there. Robert noted that the hotel contains the original bar the ownership of which was in the past conveyed to the Depot, which has completed the conveyance of its interest to the current/new owners of the Ginnocchio. Tom Speir noted that the old bus station is back in operation as an Edward Jones.

#### I. Publications

Tom Speir called the commission’s attention to “Courthouse Cornerstones” (a publication of the Texas Historical Commission) which features our 1901 Harrison County Courthouse.

#### K. Goals

No report.

#### L. Annual Preservation Awards

Tom Speir reported that the Preservation Awards will not be presented on May 17<sup>th</sup>. The committee is currently accepting applications for the awards. Jean Birmingham, Bo Ellis, and Tom are to meet and plan to have the presentation of the awards in July.

### V. Special Reports

#### A. 1901 Courthouse

No report.

#### B. Depot

Robert Wood reported that there will be a “casino night” this week at the Depot accompanied by boogie woogie music as a fundraiser. “Amtrak,” he said, “is running on time pretty good” and regularly picks up passengers who come over from Shreveport to catch the train to Dallas and parts west. He noted that they need additional staff at the Depot.

#### C. Starr Home

The commission took note of Starr Home activities. On Sunday May 3<sup>rd</sup> there was a “a free day” with a reasonable turnout. The new book club has chosen books through the end of year. June is the next meeting. (The club meets every other month.)

#### D. Michelson Museum of Art

No report.

E. Historic Designation of Downtown Marshall  
No report.

F. Historic Landmark Preservation Board  
The HLPB will have their awards ceremony on the 17<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 in the 1901 Courthouse. The board will also have a workshop at the end of the month for the benefit of all its new members.

VI. Other  
None.

VII. Adjournment  
The next meeting will be June 11<sup>th</sup> 2015. Meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Submitted by Richard Magrill