

HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
June 8th 2017

The Harrison County Historical Commission (HCHC) is the county agency in Harrison County, Texas for historic preservation. Its mission is to assist the commissioners' court and the Texas Historical Commission (THC) in the preservation of our county's historical and cultural resources and to protect and preserve the county's historic and pre-historic resources for the use, education, enjoyment and economic benefit of present and future generations.

Members Present: Robert Wood, Richard Magrill, Rose Mary Magrill, Jean Birmingham, Ann Brannon, Barbara Judkins, Marty Vaughan, Sharon Dews, and Elizabeth Bradshaw.

Visitor Present: Doc Halliday, Marshall City Commissioner.

Call to Order

Robert Wood, vice-chair, called the meeting to order on June 8th 2017 at 1:29 p.m. in the conference room of the Marshall Depot Museum and welcomed all to the meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of May 11th 2017 were approved as distributed.

III. Treasurer's Report

Elizabeth Bradshaw reported on the Friends of the Harrison County Historical Commission accounts. The statements showed the following:

Brokerage account	\$ 5,520.75
Certificate of deposit	3,300.00
Certificate of deposit	7,075.12
Greenwood Cemetery Fund	14,534.72
Friends of the HCHC Fund	3,191.92

Our records showed that through May 31st we have spent \$1,234 of the \$3,000 included in the county budget for the fiscal year running from October 2016 through September of 2017, leaving a balance of \$1,766.

IV. The standing committee reports are as follows:

A. Archaeology

Marty Vaughan reported that she has worked on the location of Coushatta Springs with Shawn Putson, vice president of the Concord Cemetery Association. They have not been able to locate it but have found another. Robert reported that Thomas Speir wanted us to be aware of a Caddo Indian site somewhere near the 628 mile marker on I-20. We think it was bulldozed. There has been difficulty locating Montvale Springs somewhere near Harleton east of Piney Cemetery. According to the *Marshall Messenger*, December 16, 1892, Montvale Springs was 12 miles northwest of Marshall on the tracks of the Paris, Marshall & Sabine Pass Railroad.

B. Archives

Robert Wood reported that Tom Speir had indicated that there was no progress on filing this past month, but that Susan Spears may be able to help us next spring. Robert emphasized that we need to get the information in our office organized, citing as an example the treasure trove of records in the Marshall T&P Depot Museum and the research use that is made of them there.

C. Cemeteries

There was discussion of what to do about the recently storm-damaged wrought iron fences at Greenwood Cemetery. Ann Brannon would like to see them sold for their scrap iron value and any proceeds added to the Greenwood Cemetery fund of the Friends of the Commission.

The cemetery records in the personal files of Bill Sullivan were mentioned. Ann Brannon reported that she had talked with him yesterday and he is not yet ready to deposit them in the History Museum.

Robert Wood reported that a woman had inquired of him about the location of the “unmarked” grave of a Harrison County Constable killed in the line of duty. Robert noted that it is not unmarked and, on the contrary is well kept.

Robert also reported that the Norris Cemetery is working toward getting recognition as an Historic Texas Cemetery. (It is located on Cooks Road.)

Barbara Judkins reported that either she or Bill Whitis will report next month on their recommendations for this fall's Cemetery Tours.

D. Education

Sharon Dews noted that the powerpoint presentation has been prepared for the upcoming meeting on June 19th of the Region VII Conference of Social Studies Teachers. She passed out hard copies of the presentation which focuses on the revival of a History Fair in the Marshall Independent School District (MISD). She mentioned the possibility of hosting a regional History Fair in the new Junior High School Building. The official boundaries of the Texas State Historical Association for the Texarkana Region have been officially adjusted to include all Harrison County ISDs in that region which alleviates the previous anomaly of Elysian Fields ISD being located in the Nacogdoches Region.

Sharon noted that the theme for this year's History Fair projects is "Compromise and Conflict in History." She shared a lengthy information piece on Harrison County history and its cities that will be used as a guide for this year's fair participants. Barbara Judkins suggested that students include in their research the county newspapers. She noted that, in browsing those records as a part of her work on the Starr Home and its life in the 1880s and 1890s, she was able to determine that a wide variety of trade goods from all over were listed for sale in the commercial advertisements. Such notices help supply a context for the lives of people in earlier times.

(The History Fair Committee is composed of Sharon Dews, Becky Palmer, Barbara Judkins, Elizabeth Bradshaw, and Gail Beil.)

E. Historical Markers

Robert Wood reported that the text for the Birthplace of Boogie Woogie Historical Marker has been approved. The marker will be located on the Depot grounds when the construction for handicapped access is complete. (Note: The Boogie Woogie music style had its origins among black railroad workers and the Depot is the logical location to celebrate this "undertold" story.)

F. History Museum

Jean Birmingham reported that the History Museum is getting ready for the beginning of its Children's Day Camp on June 26th. The camp enrolls thirty children. It is a half-day running from 9 a.m. until 12 noon. She noted that the fabrications for the museum exhibits to be erected in Marshall's Memorial City Hall will arrive in the near future. They will have to be stored awaiting the completion of the renovations to the building which will not be finished in time for the original exhibit date. It was noted that the Marshall City Commission had approved funds to be paid for from Hotel Occupancy Tax to complete the renovations.

G. Information Technology

Elizabeth Bradshaw had no report.

H. Oral History

Barbara Judkins is exploring the possibility of having someone come and do a workshop on oral history. It could be on a Saturday. We could charge \$5 and/or waive the fee if an attendee agrees to do an oral history interview.

Robert Wood asked Sharon Dews to come to the Marshall Lions Club and do a promotion on oral history.

Richard Magrill reported that as a result of our visit to the Starr Ranch House situated on the Caddo Lake Wildlife Preserve he had begun to wonder about the location of any artifacts and records of Longhorn Ordnance/Thiokol Chemical operations at that location. He suggested that a display of that work as a part of the Wildlife Refuge would be a wonderful enhancement of the experience of visitors to the headquarters and greatly extend the understanding of the site hinted at in the State Historical Marker at the entrance to the Refuge. He noted that he had learned from Dorothy Grant, a longtime employee of the plant, that the concrete forms seen on the road that we traveled to the Starr Ranch were a part of the dynamite manufacturing work when it was Longhorn Ordnance. It was suggested that, even if records and artifacts cannot be gathered, several former employees could be interviewed together as an excellent focus subject for oral history.

I. Preservation

No report at this meeting.

J. Publications

Robert Wood spoke about the Stagecoach Trace brochures and the problem of the incorrectly placed markers delineating the trace.

K. Tourism

It was noted that Carolyn Howard is busy working on the Farmers Market which has been moved to the Peter Whetstone Square in downtown Marshall. Marty Vaughan reported that the City of Waskom had a grand opening for its Farmers Market last weekend.

L. Goals

Robert Wood noted that the “Goals” folder which he had received from Tom Speir for this meeting is totally empty. He emphasized that we need to come up with new goals. It was suggested that having an oral history workshop could be a new goal for this year.

M. Annual Preservation Awards

Robert Wood reported receipt of a note of appreciation from Sabine Farms for their award. He also reported that the awards ceremony was a good event. Ann Brannon purchased a gift card for presentation to the inmates for their award as a part of the Harrison County Inmate Work Force. (Ann will be reimbursed for that card.) Sheriff McCool noted that the participation of inmates in the Work Force is for many of them the most worthwhile work that they have ever done.

V. Special Reports

A. 1901 Courthouse

No report.

B. Texas & Pacific Depot Museum

Robert Wood brought a copy of the plans for making the Depot fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. A total of \$2.35M is being spent to improve handicapped access. In addition, there will now be a baggage handling station at the Depot. The new handicapped ramp, he noted, will be wide enough for a modern golf-cart. Robert assured us that he does not think that AMTRAK is going out of business. This current project will not involve any changes to the inside of the Depot. (He also noted that there is an extremely good

construction manager in charge of this project.) In addition to the grant recently received by the Depot to be used for education, it has received a grant of \$2,000 from the Marshall Lions Club for ceiling repair.

C. Starr Home

Barbara Judkins reported that the Starr Home is introducing “Super Summer Friday Nights” with games and activities. The Home will turn on all the lawn sprinklers for people to play in. The Marshall Fire Department will bring their new engine and “blast” people with water. There will be a Friday night in June, July and August. Barbara wants the neighborhood kids to attend as well as everybody else. There will be a “critter” presentation as well as popsicles and patriot songs for the July event. The schedule for the events is June 23rd, July 16th, and August 4th. If these events go over well, the Home would like to schedule them for twice a month in 2018, maybe on the 2nd and 3rd Fridays. The Home is working on developing a “literacy night” which will include tours that the whole family can attend and every child will be given a free book. She emphasized that the current work on restoring the kitchen and the servant’s room at the Starr Home will enable the staff to talk about how the other half, the servants, lived during the heyday of the Home.

D. Michelson Museum of Art

No report.

E. Historic Landmark Preservation Board (HLPB)

No report.

VI. Other

Nothing to report.

VII. Administrative

Mail. Robert Wood passed around several items of mail from folks requesting funds.

VIII. Adjournment

The next meeting will be July 13th 2017 at the T&P Depot Museum at 1:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

Submitted by Richard Magrill