

HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
July 13th 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: Thomas Speir, Robert Wood, Richard Magrill, Rose Mary Magrill, Becky Palmer, Bill T. Whitis, Marty Vaughan, Sharon Dews, Gail Beil, and Thomas Richardson.

Visitor Present: none.

Call to Order

Tom Speir, chair, called the meeting to order on July 13th 2017 at 1:32 p.m. in the conference room of the Marshall Depot Museum and welcomed all to the meeting. He thanked Robert Wood for chairing the June meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of June 8th 2017 were approved as distributed.

III. Treasurer's Report

In the absence of Elizabeth Bradshaw, Tom Speir 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	14,535.08
Friends of the HCHC Fund	2,542.06

Our records showed that through June 30th we have spent \$1,656 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 \$1,344.

IV. The standing committee reports are as follows:

A. Archaeology

Tom Speir reported that he had not been able to access the sites nor find needed information in his work toward recording the locations of Rosborough Springs or Montvale Springs. A newly recorded archeological site since our last meeting is 41HS1018; it is the location of a Caddo Indian village and/or burial mound wiped out during the construction of I-20. Robert Wood reported that he has continued to serve as a volunteer on the archeological work on the Union Missionary Baptist Church in Jefferson. The project is coming together well. The site of Gum Springs church, school and cemetery has been recorded as 41HS1017 and the springs as 41HS1016. (The coordinates of the school were used as the center of the community). Marty Vaughan reported that there is an iron spring in the Waskom area that could be recorded. She is still looking for the location of Coushatta Springs.

B. Archives

Tom Speir reported that there is still much to be done in getting the archives of the Commission in good order.

C. Cemeteries

Bill Whitis summarized his reports for June and July which are given in full below:

JUNE 2017 CEMETERY REPORT

BY BILL T. WHITIS

The following is an account of actions recorded since the previous meeting.

Cemetery Visits made since the previous meeting: Grover, Old Grover, Sweet Home, Friendship #2 (south of Hallsville area), Crain-Smelley, McJohnson, St. Joseph, Macedonia, Colonial Gardens, and Algoma. New burials, some of which are not announced in the

Marshall News Messenger, have been added to the Findagrave.com website for Ancestry.com users to use for reference in their genealogy work.

Macedonia Cemetery - Work continues on the Macedonia Cemetery plot map. Their annual Memorial Day cleanup was rained out, but I am still working to provide them with a working copy so church and family members can add names to plots with no markers to help properly identify burial sites with no above ground visible information. No known plot map is known to currently exist since the passing of Marshall resident Lillian Banks' father (he kept all known records in his memory). Since his passing, some plots have been selected that are in the driving paths for the cemetery, and those paths will soon be blocked off. Newly purchased burial plots will only be made available in the open field to the south of the current cemetery, which was already a part of the current property designated for cemetery usage.

Haley Cemetery - I attended the cleanup at Haley Cemetery off Marshall-Leigh Road on June 3rd. A great deal of brush was removed and some attendees helped clear small tree growth to the north to help expose headstones and burials that had previously been discovered but were difficult to access, including members of the Worrior family and other burials only marked with a simple mud fired brick as a head stone and foot stone.

Texas Historic Cemeteries - There has been a growing interest in Texas Historic Cemetery designations in our county. Haley Cemetery on Marshall Leigh Road, Old Town Cemetery in Elysian Fields, Norris Cemetery on Cooks Road in Marshall, and Taylor Cemetery south of I-20 near Pirkey Power Plant have all had people requesting the forms or alerting us that they have already begun filling out forms to have these cemeteries designated as historic. I continue to work with all persons involved to fill out their forms.

Laws Regarding Cemeteries - I have been alerted to many new/unknown laws regarding cemeteries. New burial depth requirements are now only 2 feet from the top of the casket to the ground, as opposed to 6 feet from the bottom of the casket. Also, a number of calculations regarding new cemeteries are also now in place regarding new cemeteries where they must now be several miles out from current city population borders, which may inhibit expansion of all current cemetery properties that do not already have adjacent/unused land not already designated as burial grounds.

Historical Marker Workshop - The Texas Historical Commission (THC) along with the Cemetery Preservation Program have agreed to host an Official Texas Historical Marker workshop in our county

at the Marshall Visual Arts Center on Tuesday July 25th from 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. Call 512-463-5853 to reserve space.

Fred Thomas "Pops" Long - I was contacted by Gail Beil recently for information on the burial location of Fred Thomas "Pops" Long, a member of the professional Negro League who is buried in McJohnson Cemetery, west of the corner of Pinecrest and Hwy 59. She is working with someone writing a book based on his college dissertation showing a correlation between religion & sports. The student center at Wiley College is named for Fred Thomas Long; He led the Wiley Wildcats football team to three black college football national championships, in 1928, 1932, and 1945. I was able to provide them with a map of the location, headstone image, and picture of the family plot to help identify the location He is buried in the top eastern side of the cemetery with several other family members.

I currently have leads on about 15 additional cemeteries at this time and am actively pursuing access to them.

JULY 2017 CEMETERY REPORT

BY BILL T. WHITIS

The following is an account of actions recorded since the previous meeting.

Cemetery Visits made since the previous meeting: Forest Hill, Noonday, Hallsville, Cain, Memory Park, Lily Hill, LaGrone, Hebron, Cartersville, Potters Creeks, Nesbitt, Colonial Gardens, Ebenezer, Sunny Hill/Center Hill, Smyrna, Crockett, Piney (Harleton), Hope Springs, First Community, and St. Marks/Craver. My primary focus this month was on cemeteries along the FM 449 and FM 154 corridors.

Longview Site - I also took on an extra project from the THC looking for a burial site in Longview around 405 Greenleaf Street on July 3rd. No one was at home there, but I looked around the GPS coordinates in the front and side yard and also asked several neighbors if they knew of any burials in the area. No one knew of any existing burial sites and no evidence of markers was found around the property. This area was primarily wooded until the late 1960s when new housing began to be developed here.

Bells/Wayside Cemetery - On July 10th, Marty Vaughan alerted me she had gained entry to a property and found a burial site I knew about but had not been able to locate -- Bells Cemetery, also known as Wayside Cemetery, south of I-20 in Waskom on Old Dumpground Road. I was first alerted of the existstence of this site by Reverend Edwin Lee of Pine Grove Church in his attempts to find members of his family. Marty

documented the site with GPS coordinates, took several photos of headstones that could be found, and has a key to the property. I am working with Rev. Lee and his schedule to revisit the site and get his insight, but I will visit the site soon with Marty in any case to gather as much data as I can. Members of the Hayes and Ragland families are interred here.

Other Waskom Cemetery Sites - Marty Vaughan has also been hard at work to gain access to other Waskom cemetery sites including a Blocker Cemetery north of FM 9 and FM 1999, one near FM 2625 and American Plant Road, and another by the railroad tracks on FM 134.

FM449 and Dee Scott Road - I have contacted a property owner, Thomas Morris, about a possible cemetery just east of Hebron Baptist Church at FM 449 and Dee Scott Road that the THC has on their Atlas. Investigating along open paths into this property near the site have not shown any evidence of headstones, so I am waiting to hear from the property owner before looking further.

Batts, Byassee, and Cole Cemeteries - I am currently trying to find the locations of Batts Cemetery and Byassee Cemetery, both located around Owens Corner Road in the Pope City area. I am also trying to find Cole Cemetery which is supposed to be behind the first home at Walkers Mill Road, but am unsure if it is at the Noonday Road end or FM 449 end. The home on the 449 end is abandoned and no cemetery can be seen from the road, and there is no nearby home on the Noonday Road end so the assumed home may have been removed or deteriorated. Peoples Funeral Home performed several of the burials here in the past, but they have so far been unable to find records of current property owners or information on its actual location.

Macedonia Cemetery - Work continues on the map of plots at Macedonia Cemetery; work is slow with many revisions being made, but it should be completed in the next few months.

Over 600 graves have been photographed this month and 173 new graves have been found; all data is added to the Findagrave.com database. When I photograph a burial and transcribe the information to Findagrave, I also spend 5 or so minutes on each one trying to add data or fill in missing information on place of birth, parents, spouses, children, maiden names, and the like -- this data is all transmitted to Ancestry.com to aid people in their research on burials in our county.

I currently have leads on about 15 additional cemeteries at this time and am actively pursuing access to them.

Cemetery Signs on Highways and Cemetery Publicity - See IV.L. Goals below (pages 9-10).

D. Education

Region VII Conference of Social Studies Teachers - Sharon Dews reported on our presence at the Region VII Conference of Social Studies Teachers. We did not have anybody attend our workshop session but did get a lot of visitors at our table. Carolina Castillo Crimm, newly appointed Texas State Historian, was very interested in our revival of the history fair. She teaches at Sam Houston State University and is interested in getting the fair going again in Walker County. We will try with Region VII again next year. We think our focus on Harrison County and specific grade levels may have deterred attendance. We will give it a broader and catchier name at next year's conference. The committee is putting together a Powerpoint presentation and script promoting this year's History Fair that can be sent to schools in the county for their use at their convenience and on their own schedule. The Commission reviewed a display used on our table at Region VII which featured the Powerpoint presentation.

Presentation to Marshall Lions Club - Sharon Dews reported on her presentation to the Marshall Lions Club. Robert Wood expressed his appreciation for her report to the Lions on the revival of a History Fair in the Marshall Independent School District and the plans to extend our efforts to the Harleton, Hallsville, Karnack, Waskon, and Elysian Fields ISDs.

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

E. Historical Markers

Elks Club Marker - Gail Beil said that we will move up the Elks Club marker activities and have a casino night on October 28th to celebrate, to dedicate the marker, and to raise money for the Wonderland of Lights. (October 28th is a Saturday night.)

People's Funeral Home - People's Funeral Home is 100 years old and there is work progressing on a marker application.

Miscellaneous - Gail Beil is working on the Black Business District marker. (She also mentioned that there is a young man writing his dissertation on the movie "Pinky." Marshall was the only city in the country to ban the movie.) Tom Speir noted that the Stagecoach Road marker is now attached to its granite base and ready for installation at the Pine Bluff Baptist Church location. Work is ongoing to schedule a time for the rededication of the marker once it is installed at the church. The Birthplace of Boogie Woogie marker has arrived. It may be

January before we can talk about placing it at the Depot in order to allow time for Amtrak to finish its construction work. Piney Baptist Church in Harleton is interested in doing a marker application. Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church is also interested in securing a marker. Gail Beil is still interested in doing an application for the old Cities Service building in downtown Marshall. Tom Speir has contacted Wiley College again to see if they are pursuing the project of a marker application for Coach “Pop” Long and Dr. Lawrence Dixon. Tom indicated that we will let any “undertold story” applications slide for this year since we have around seven possible marker applications anyway.

Marker Workshop - On July 25th (a Tuesday) there will be a free marker workshop in our county. Tom Speir noted that we will need a couple of people to help with setup at the Marshall Visual Arts Center. Eight have registered but we have been told to expect at least twenty. Sharon Dews asked about the exact time that people would be needed for setup. Tom indicated that we will meet at 1 p.m. to setup for the 2 p.m. meeting. Thomas Richardson had a question regarding documentation requirements on the marker applications. It was noted that each newspaper article should count as a separate source. The workshop will talk about cemeteries, deeds, census records, and Sanborn insurance maps among other topics. We will also need snacks for this workshop.

F. History Museum

Museum Archives - Gail Beil, in her role as a member of Marshall’s City Commission, addressed the subject of the debate over whether to move the History Museum’s archives into the south side of the Marshall Business Center (across from Memorial City Hall). The Museum board has toured that building. She wishes to be helpful when the topic is considered by the Marshall City Commission. The Museum, she noted, will need at least 4,000 square feet of climate-controlled secured space which means it would require the whole downstairs of the center.

Military Exhibit in Memorial City Hall - Becky Palmer reported that the Museum is still getting ready for the installation of its military exhibit in Memorial City Hall but it does not know when the completion date may allow for it to be accomplished. Once the exhibit has finally been installed a dedication will be scheduled. Instead of four luncheons this October, the Museum will host a single luncheon in November focused on military service and scheduled before Veterans Day. They are looking for someone to do a 20-30 minute talk on the military

service of their relatives. The Commission discussed several names of folks who could be the subject of the talk. In connection with this exhibit, the Museum plans a military themed calendar to be made available for the year 2018.

Smithsonian Exhibit - The Museum will host another Smithsonian traveling exhibit in the coming year. The exhibit will arrive March the 23rd and continue through the middle of April. It may be installed at the Weisman Center as was the previous, "Journey Stories Exhibit," or it may locate in the Marshall Public Library. Volunteers to just sit there and watch over the exhibit may be needed. It was suggested that perhaps this exhibit could be situated at the Ginnochio Hotel if the owners are interested and the building is ready by then. It is expected that the exhibit will bring in a good amount of foot traffic.

Genealogy Workshop - Becky noted that the Museum may sponsor another genealogy workshop in the spring of next year. The one held this past spring was very well-attended.

G. Information Technology

Our minutes on the county website are up to date. Tom Speir also reported that at the Region VII Conference of Social Studies Teachers they had met the folks who do the iTour USA[®] QR codes. (These codes are a way of supplying visitors, through their i-phones, with information about the history of locations as they walk around various sites such as downtown Marshall.)

H. Oral History

Tom Speir noted that Commission Member Audrey Kariel has reported that Linda Spruell may be interested in helping us with oral history. Linda was invited to this meeting. Tom has put together a new Oral History Agreement form which he passed out for comments. The form can be used with folks when requesting that they do an interview. In the meantime, we are still looking for someone to do interviews.

I. Preservation

Tom Speir reported that we have received a letter from Power Engineers, Inc. about a new electrical sub-station and power line between Hallsville and Longview. Tom sent them back a letter accompanied by a map prepared by Bill Whitis showing cemetery locations. In particular, we are concerned that any work be on the lookout for the old Fort Crawford location and that, if found, it not be

inadvertently demolished. Tom thinks the new powerline will run southwest of where the old fort was located.

On the weekend of October 20th the Texas Jewish Historical Society will be meeting in Marshall (location unknown).

Saturday August 12th will be the date for the Jefferson Civil War Symposium.

J. Publications

Thomas Richardson loaned the Commission an “Old Schooldays” booklet. Bill Whitis has scanned it and copies can be obtained from him. Bill has supplied Tom Speir with a cd as well as a hard copy.

Thomas Richardson noted that old Collins Point will be 79 years old on the 21st of August. On that occasion, Thomas will be speaking to the Hallsville Lions Club about Collins Point.

There was discussion regarding brochures publicizing the various museums and historical sites and trails at the Texas Welcome Center on I-20. Robert Wood thinks that these materials are already there. Marty Vaughan checked with the center as we continued our meeting and reported that it was well-supplied with the exception that it needs more City of Marshall maps.

K. Tourism

Tom Speir showed a copy of a calendar of local events which he had obtained at the Chamber of Commerce. We are encouraging that events be recorded on it to prevent conflicting dates. It is mailed out each month and done by Dr. Brenda Dearman, a retired music professor from East Texas Baptist University. (We think it may be produced on behalf of the Regional Arts Council.) Brenda also sends out special emails as well.

L. Goals

Highway Signs for County Cemeteries - Tom noted that our minutes for last month reported that we did not have anything in the “goals” folder for consideration. He alerted us to the work being done on repair of the highway sign for Grover Cemetery and the possibility of getting the Texas Department of Transportation to erect additional signs. Starting in September new free signs can be put up for cemeteries that are outside of city limits. Such signs are available for cemeteries adjacent to or no more than two miles from the road. Historic Texas

Cemeteries can get a brown sign. Others will be green. Rebecca Wells (telephone 903-799-1482) supplied this information. She is a traffic engineer and the contact person. Commission members were excited about this opportunity. Marty Vaughan suggested that maybe we could get Robin from the *Marshall News Messenger* to do a story publicizing the availability of the new signs.

Cemetery Publicity - Bill Whitis reported that he has thought about a periodic article in the paper about cemeteries where he would ask and respond to questions. Tom indicated that he will pursue that possibility. It should be of interest and can make the Commission more visible.

Fire Inspections for Historic Structures - It was noted that Mimosa Hall, a historic structure in the county, recently caught fire. Wasp spray was being used by repair workers and a sander spark and ignited the highly volatile spray. There was minimum damage. Tom has met with the county fire marshall. They are trying to begin a free fire inspection for historic buildings in the county. The county fire marshall would do the actual fire inspection, but Tom thinks it might be possible to invite Tony Crosby or Ralph Newlan to do an architectural inspection at the same time. After the inspections, there will be the need to familiarize local fire chiefs of the several “emergency services districts” in the county with the results.

M. Annual Preservation Awards

Tom Speir emphasized that we need to start thinking about next year’s preservation awards.

V. Special Reports

A. 1901 Courthouse

No report.

B. Texas & Pacific Depot Museum

Robert Wood reported that the depot is still in the midst of construction work for improved handicapped access. This project will go on for about nine months more. Robert will invite the contractor to our August meeting to give a report on the work on the Ginnochio Hotel.

C. Starr Home

No report.

D. Michelson Museum of Art

The Michelson will host the Hoover Watercolor Society Traveling Exhibit from July 6th through August 26th.

E. Historic Landmark Preservation Board (HLPB)

No report.

VI. Other

Nothing to report.

VII. Administrative

Mail. Tom reported that we have received the Texas Archeological Society Newsletter. He has picked up our 2016 Distinguished Service Award from the County Judge. Tom thinks we have received a Distinguished Service Award every year since the THC began to give them. He has emailed THC to see if we can get a replacement for our misplaced 2015 award.

Memberships. Our budget expires in a month or so. We will renew our various memberships with the funds remaining in this year's budget. Rather than considering each membership each year, on motion, the Commission authorizes the chair to renew our memberships each year as they fall due and simply report the renewals with the understanding that priority in renewals goes to memberships in county and state organizations.

Speaker System. If money is available in the budget we will get a portable speaker system at about \$200 cost through the County's Amazon account.

Facebook Page. Tom reported that we still need more photos for our Facebook page.

VIII. Adjournment

The next meeting will be August 10th 2017 at the T&P Depot Museum at 1:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

Submitted by Richard Magrill