

HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
November 9th 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: Tom Speir, Richard Magrill, Rose Mary Magrill, Robert Wood, Marty Vaughan, Bill T. Whitis, Jean Birmingham, Thomas Richardson, Sharon Dews, and Barbara Judkins.

Visitors Present: Betsy Cadenhead, Julia Foley Bey, and Gerald Gibson.

Call to Order

Tom Speir, chair, called the meeting to order on November 9th 2017 at 1:29 p.m. in the conference room of the T&P Depot Museum and welcomed all to the meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of October 12th 2017 were approved as sent out.

III. Treasurer's Report

Bill Whitis shared information regarding 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	14,536.19
Friends of the HCHC Fund	1,842.24

Tom Speir provided an update on the records of the commission which showed that our expenses were the same as last month with \$38 having been spent of the \$3,000 included in the county budget for the fiscal year running from October 2017 through September of 2018, leaving a balance of \$2,962.

IV. The standing committee reports are as follows:

A. Archaeology

Caddo Indian Sites. Tom Speir reported that he had been called to investigate work at the Timber Hill site in Jefferson. The area investigated was found to be backfill from previous work and not archeologically significant. (The Timber Hill location is on James Bayou and is thought to be one of the last locations of the Caddo Indians in the East Texas area.) He noted that archeologists are working on precise locations for the upper, middle, and lower villages of the Caddo tribe. “The more construction that goes on,” he remarked, “the more archeological sites are lost.”

Archeological Publications. Tom received word that the state had research books on archeology available and he ordered a number of titles for the office that are available for use. He also offered commission members full sets of the brochures dealing with archeology that the state provides as well as copies of posters giving examples of arrowheads and the time periods which they represent. The brochure set includes pieces dealing with each of the following topics:

- How to Get Involved with Texas Archeology;
- Documenting Archeological Collections;
- Destruction of Archeological Sites in Texas;
- What Does an Archeologist Do?;
- Marine Archeology in Texas;
- Texas Archeological Stewardship Network;
- Historic Texas Lands Plaque;
- Artifact Collecting in Texas;
- State Archeological Landmark Designation;
- A Property Owner’s Guide to Archeological Sites;
- Texas Archeology Month; and
- Laws Protecting Archeological Sites.

East Texas Archeological Conference. The 25th annual meeting of the East Texas Archeological Conference will be at the University of Texas Tyler on the 24th of February 2018.

Rosenwald School Sites. Tom also reported that work is ongoing to try to find the sites of more of the old Rosenwald Schools which served the African-American community in the early years of the last century. Betsy Cadenhead is working with Tom on this project. They are using a 1912 Harrison County Soil Map provided by Thomas Richardson. (This map has been digitally scanned by the Texas General Land Office in Austin and is now available to all the citizens of Texas.

Teaching Guides. Tom also shared two documents which provide teaching guides for a) introducing the subject of archeology into the classroom and b) how to run an archeology fair.

B. Archives

Tom Speir reported that the vast majority of boxed materials in the office have now been integrated into the filing system. Once all the materials have been placed in drawers, we will need to work on getting the documents in the folders in better order.

C. Cemeteries

Bill Whitis summarized his work on cemeteries in a November report which is given in full below:

NOVEMBER 2017 CEMETERY REPORT

BY BILL T. WHITIS

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

Capturing the Spirits Tour — I met with Barbara Judkins from the Starr Family Home State Historic Site and Ann Brannon on October 18th for a pre-walk-through discussion of the cemetery tours to be made of Marshall Hebrew and Greenwood cemeteries . We loosely talked about stories of those interred there and how the upcoming tours would be managed in terms of a path to the various burial sites. (Note: Barbara Judkins promoted this Capturing the Spirits tour on the Talk of East Texas on KMHT radio.)

On October 28th, the day of our scheduled tours, Barbara provided a printed handout for our over 30 visitors and had a very well received group at the Marshall Hebrew Cemetery. We had visitors with questions that she was able to elaborate on with aid of

her notes, as well as those who had additional stories to add to the conversation.

Ann Brannon led the second tour which was at Greenwood Cemetery . In her first narrative she had a wonderful story that started at one person's burial (a murder), that led to a second and then back to a person buried beside the first person. Ann kept a theme of tying together multiple burials across the cemetery back to one another and had handouts for the 30 plus visitors who came to hear tales of our county's past citizens.

Gail Beil led our third cemetery tour which was at the McJohnson Cemetery.

Texas Jewish Historical Society Visit — Saturday October 21st, the Texas Jewish Historical Society visited the Marshall Hebrew Cemetery . Gail Beil led them on a tour starting at the former Temple Moses Montefiore site. I met Lynna Kay Shuffield there who was working on the Historic Texas Cemetery designation (now submitted) for the Marshall Hebrew Cemetery, and she made recommendations to have the new medallion placed on the brick wall at the entrance rather than on the pole with the current plaque to avoid additional constant trimming of the bushes below the plaque. She also made recommendations to have the Live Oak tree over the May Family and Wolf Goldsmith plot trimmed back to help prevent further damage to the knocked over headstone; Audrey Kariel was included on this conversation.

Ben Harbor said he would meet to discuss the tree trimming on October 28th during the cemetery tours, but did not show.

McJohnson Cemetery Association — Thursday, October 26th, two members of the McJohnson Cemetery Association met with me — Nina Hodge and Oletha Clough. Members of the Mallalieu United Methodist Church on Fry Street behind the high school compose most of the members. They told me all mapped records of burials are gone, and new burial spots are determined by sticking a long piece of re-bar into the ground repeatedly until they find a spot with no presumed tree roots or previous burials.

At the Capturing the Spirits tour, Gail Beil and I met with more members of the McJohnson Cemetery Association, Wanda & James Clark (Wanda is the cemetery treasurer). One visiting

member, Mark McClain, said he would look into the land deeds further to try and find out the origins of this cemetery and currently from his work, we believe a member of the McJohnston family (with a "t") may have been the original landowners who deeded the property to become a cemetery space. Additional research is needed to verify this fact.

Newspaper Articles — My October newspaper article in the *Marshall News Messenger* focused on Powder Mill Cemetery , and I am working on finishing articles for Gill Community Cemetery and Macedonia Cemetery for November and December.

Deer Season and Other Projects — Deer season prohibits work on more undocumented wooded areas of the cemeteries, but I still have Young (located near Loop 390 past FM 154), Collier Plantation (south of I-20 east of 59), Wayside (south of Waskom), Old Blocker (north of Jonesville) and Clark and Cowater (in the Hallsville area) on my list of the hopefully soon to be done.

Ewing Chapel Cemetery Marker. Tom Speir indicated that work on the marker text for the Ewing Chapel Cemetery is ongoing and will not be approved until all are happy.

Marshall Hebrew Cemetery Marker. Tom reported that we have received copies of the documentation relative to the existing large marker at the Marshall Hebrew Cemetery. This material is being added to the office archives

Greenwood Cemetery. Ann Brannon provided a press release regarding new markers to be installed at Greenwood Cemetery. The release is as follows:

**VETERAN GRAVE MARKERS PROVIDED TO GREENWOOD CEMETERY
BY ANN BRANNON**

The Harrison County Historical Commission (HCHC) is pleased to announce that this Tuesday, November 14th; a set of four grave markers for veterans from the 19th century will be installed in Greenwood Cemetery at 9:00 a.m. Richard Gaulden at Meadowbrook Funeral Home in Marshall will supervise the installations.

These government grave markers are supplied by the Veterans Administration (VA) and have been provided to help to more permanently identify some historic burials in the old cemetery that are in need of better identification. Even though the government provides these headstones for free, there may be a charge for installing them.

Ann Brannon, with the HCHC, was instrumental in researching these burials and providing documentation as to their identities and locations within the cemetery. On her own initiative, she has identified 17 unmarked burials at Greenwood that hold the remains of veterans from the 19th century. "With all this research, I feel I have come to know these people (burials) personally," Ann said. "I want to see that they are properly recognized and not left in an unmarked grave. I have identified 17 veterans in unmarked graves. The first one I did was James Willie Pope who died in 1908."

The VA rules just changed on who could request these headstones for deceased veterans. "It has been only family members that could apply until just a few years ago. I knew that the Whaleys were direct relatives of Pope so Tom Whaley signed the application for me. When I developed a relationship with Meadowbrook and tried again to get headstones, the rules had changed about who could request them and the Gaudens agreed to help me."

"They have also donated a small stone for a lady who had only a temporary funeral home marker. That time, I stepped on something that wasn't earth. When I started digging, I found the metal marker with enough info to look her up and supply the rest of the information concerning her date of death. When I took it to Melinda Gauden to see about repairing the temporary marker, she said that they would like to replace it with a footstone size marker with the lady's name and dates."

These military headstones, provided by the U.S. government, may be acquired by submitting Form VA40-1330 with supporting documentation to the Department of Veterans Affairs. The form and

complete instructions can be found on the VA website va.gov . You may also email the VA at mps.headstones@va.gov

Applications for vets who died prior to April 6, 1917 can be submitted by any interested party. Those who died after that date must be submitted by next of kin.

For those persons who have someone that is not a veteran who is in need of a headstone, they can contact the Marshall Monument Company. They say they can provide you with a small marker at a reasonable price. The stone markers are 4" x 8", and for \$35 they will do 2 lines – name on first (if not too long) and birth – death years on second line.

The Harrison County Historical Museum's Research Center is a prime source for gathering documentation needed by the VA. There are other research sources available online, such as FindAGrave.com. Only by being reasonably certain, with backup documentation, that a specific person is buried in a specific grave can the process of installing an identifying marker begin.

Bill Whitis, chair of the HCHC's Cemetery Committee, is very knowledgeable about those families that have relatives interred in the over 200 known historic cemeteries in Harrison County. He may be contacted at billwhitis@sbcglobal.net. Ann Brannon can be reached on the "Historic Greenwood Cemetery's" Facebook page, or through the HCHC's office.

Private property owners are encouraged to advise the HCHC of any cemetery on their property, no matter how small. Recognizing their existence will not change the current land use, but this notice can help, at no charge, to provide a level of protection for those cemeteries from public works projects.

More research on other burials is ongoing, and more markers are hoped to be installed at some future date.

Powdermill Cemetery. Bill Whitis reported that the Powdermill Cemetery has a new policy which requires that a \$35 stone marker be installed at the time of

any new burials in order to assure that graves are permanently marked. Families are then free to replace the inexpensive markers with larger ones. Bill suggested that such a policy might be a consideration for the regulations of other cemeteries in the county.

Unauthorized Burials of Cremains. It was also noted that there is concern that cremains are being buried and markers placed for their sites without proper authorization.

Cemetery Cleanup Days. Tom Speir reported that Canaan Cemetery's cleanup day went well.

Woodlawn Cemetery. There was discussion of a series of rock cairns behind the fence of the Woodlawn Cemetery. Some have mistakenly supposed that they represent Native American burial sites, but they are not the style that Native Americans would have used and, short of excavation, there is no way of knowing if the cairns are marking grave sites or have some other meaning.

Highway Signs. Thomas Richardson reported that the new Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) sign for the Noonday Cemetery had been erected and looked good. Tom Speir reminded all that TXDOT was again erecting signs for cemeteries outside of cities which meet criteria regarding access and convenient proximity to highways. He encouraged that he be contacted regarding any requests for such signs.

D. Education

General Work. Sharon Dews reported on work toward the history fairs in the various Independent School Districts (ISDs). So far the only ISD that has indicated that it will not hold a competition this year is Karnack. Marshall will hold its fair on January 11th. Sharon has not been successful in checking with the principal of the new Marshall Junior High School (where we hope to hold the countywide event). Tom volunteered to make the contact with MJHS. The theme for this year's fairs is Conflict and Compromise in History with participants focusing on subjects relating to Harrison County.

District Competition. Sharon indicated that we still don't know if our countywide winners will automatically go on to a district competition or if those who go on to district will face a different selection process than our own judging.

Medallions, Certificates, Judges, etc. There was discussion to determine the number of medallions and certificates that will be needed. We will want to have a couple of blue and red ribbons to attach to the two winning exhibits in order

to mark them clearly for those viewing the projects. We will also need to start rounding up judges once the date is set for the countywide event, and we will need to schedule more than two hours to do the judging in order to give each entry an appropriate amount of attention.

Schedule Conflict. The Marshall ISD history fair is to be held on Thursday, January 11th 2018 which is also our next meeting date. Tom encouraged commission members to volunteer to serve as judges even though it would mean that they would have to miss this meeting.

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

E. Historical Markers

Kahn Memorial Hospital Marker Relocation. Tom Speir reported that the Kahn Memorial Hospital Marker in front of Christus/Good Shepherd Hospital has been moved and permanently repositioned in a flower bed near the front entrance to the hospital where it is well-lighted. Logan Jamison-Hatch has refurbished the marker as a part of his Eagle Scout project. “Everybody is happy,” Tom reported.

Resubmission of Marker Applications. Tom improved the essays that were submitted with the applications and resubmitted them for Young’s Mill Pond and the old First National Bank of Hallsville. The Bishop College marker application has also been resubmitted. It was approved last year but the money to pay for it never arrived. This year we already have the money in hand. We had to get a new signature page from the property owner and that has occasioned some delay. The Board of Directors of the corporate owner will sign today and Tom hopes to resubmit the application tomorrow. Next Wednesday is the deadline for submission this year. (Gail Beil was not present to report on her work on getting the application for Registered Texas Historic Landmark status for the old Cities Service Center in downtown Marshall.)

Bishop College Marker Location. Robert Wood expressed some concern regarding the placement of the Bishop College marker and fear that it might be stolen. Tom Speir indicated that the poles of the markers are set deep in the ground making them difficult to remove. In addition, it was pointed out that cast aluminum is not very valuable and that scrap metal businesses are not likely to purchase them particularly since all newer markers carry the wording: “Property of the State of Texas” on them.

Marker Refinishing Project. It was called to our attention that the marker for the actual location (as opposed to the cemetery) of the Confederate Powdermill on Loop 390 needs restoration. Bill Whitis indicated that Logan Jamison-Hatch is aware of the marker. He has already restored the markers for Trinity Episcopal Church, Kahn Memorial Hospital, and Greenwood Cemetery as a part of his Eagle Scout project. It was also noted that there is a video on You-Tube that shows how to restore markers.

F. History Museum

Jean Birmingham reported that the history museum is still waiting for the Marshall Memorial City Hall renovation to be completed so that the museum's military exhibits can be set up there. She noted that names can still be added. Tom Speir passed out forms that can be used for adding a name. On Saturday November 11th, museum staff will be in the Marshall Mall to scan private documents which family members may wish to have added to the database on military personnel from the county. (This service will be a part of Veterans Day activities.)

G. Information Technology

Our minutes on the county website are up to date. Regarding the use of new technology, Bill Whitis reported that this year he had paid Facebook to boost our cemetery tour, Capturing the Spirits, and that we got a 1000% increase in traffic on our page. An article on our efforts toward erecting a statue of James Foreman, Jr. on Peter Whetsone Square has also been added to our Facebook page. The commission is most grateful for Bill's investment in promoting this year's cemetery tour!

H. Oral History

Tom Speir reported that we still need volunteers to do interviews of our growing list of persons with valuable knowledge of Harrison County history. Rose Mary Magrill indicated that she was trying to encourage an interviewer who regularly has (unrecorded!) conversations with one of our older citizens with memorable recollections of the past. She told him that we were hoping to arrange a training opportunity next summer and hopes that the training will give him confidence to make a recording. Barbara Judkins will make contact with Dan Utlej of the University of Texas to see if he would be willing to do an oral history

workshop next summer. She will also check into whatever might be involved in the way of costs.

I. Preservation

City of Waskom. Tom Speir reported that he had received an official letter from the City of Waskom asking that the memorandum of agreement with the Historical Commission be terminated since the city has abandoned its efforts to provide a new community center for the town in the previously considered historic structures. (The community center, they found, can be located in another, non-historic building for less cost.)

Communications Tower. The new communications tower on US59 south has been approved by the Texas Historical Commission (THC).

James Farmer, Jr. Proposed Statue. Work continues on the project of erecting a statue on Peter Whetstone Square in memory of Marshall native and Civil Rights pioneer, James Farmer, Jr. Gail Beil is working on the financial campaign and at the moment is trying to locate a 501(c)(3) organization which will receive any contributions toward the costs of the statue. Tom also reminded us that the County Commission wants to receive and adopt recommended rules and regulations to govern the proposed erection of future monuments on county property. Tom indicated that he had located examples of such policies for Henderson and Van Zandt counties and had sent County Judge Hugh Taylor links to the documents. The THC had reported that they were unaware of any counties that had put such policies in place, but, happily, Tom located the ones for Henderson and Van Zandt so that whatever group our County Commission appoints to formulate recommendations will have these two examples to consider. Tom has indicated that he hopes Commissioner Jay Ebarb will serve on whatever committee is appointed by the County Commission.

J. Publications

Tom Speir passed around an article on “Marshall Main Street,” contained in *View Magazine*. (*View Magazine* is an occasional newspaper insert). Work continues on the Stage Coach Trace brochure, although Gerald Gibson reported that he has been having difficulty contacting Gail Beil regarding their joint work on it. Tom Speir indicated that he would assist Gerald with touching base with Gail about their work.

K. Tourism

General. Tom Speir welcomed Julia Foley Bey to this month's meeting. She continues her interest in helping promote tourism throughout Harrison County. She indicated that we need regular, recurring events in order to attract tourists to the county. Our cemetery tours are good. Specific events celebrating the holidays connected with patriotic days would also be a good focus. Perhaps we could consider doing national flags along US80. (US80 has been designated as the World War II Veterans Memorial Highway; this designation was first made by the Texas Highway Department in the 1940s and later by the Texas Legislature in the 21st century.) Also providing opportunities for visits to historic homes is big with heritage tourism. (*Note:* it is least expensive to do the promotion for such events on line.) Our educational programs could be expanded, *e.g.* in addition to the revived history fairs, we might be able to get archeology into schools. Driving trails such as Stagecoach Trace could be promoted (although we would have to solve the problem of missing and misplaced markers before doing such promotion).

Julia expressed her appreciation for the work the commission already does in the area of tourism and hopes to be helpful as we expand our efforts.

Existing Trails. It was noted by commission members that we already have three trails: Buard (focusing on African-American sites), Lale (focusing on historic sites), and Stagecoach Trace. Of course, in addition to the Stagecoach Trace marker problems, some of the Buard Trail signs have been stolen and sold for scrap.

Flags on US80. The year 2026 will be the 250th anniversary of the independence of the United States. Maybe we could all have an event and/or events along US80 at the same time. Once we have secured the money for our proposed markers celebrating US80 as the World War II memorial highway we could advertise the Marshall Rotary Club flag program. (The Rotary Club rents the flags to participants, puts them up and takes them down on all the patriotic holidays for a fee as a money-raising effort to support their service projects.) We could do a mailing to all the homes and businesses along US80 from Waskom to Longview Heights soliciting their participation. (It was pointed out that there is already a twice-yearly garage sale on US80 which draws people to the county.)

Wisteria Promotion. The wisteria along parts of US80 in the eastern part of the county was also mentioned. Its original planting was possibly instigated as a

way to honor the veterans of World War II. Julia volunteered to do research on this planting with the idea of promoting the season when wisteria is in bloom.

T.C. Lindsay & Co. Marty Vaughan reported that the response to the anniversary celebration at the “Jonesville General Store” last Saturday (November 4th) was almost overwhelming. (T.C. Lindsay & Co. has been serving the Jonesville community since 1847.) On the second Saturday in December (the 8th), all are invited to the store’s annual open house which will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with special events from 10 until 3. (Marty noted that due to a postponement of one week, the Waskom Christmas Parade will be held that same day.)

Voices from Small Places. Tom Speir reminded us that “Voices from Small Places” has an upcoming workshop on January 27th 2018 in the Marshall Visual Arts Center from 10:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. (The workshop is free of charge.)

L. Goals

Fire Inspections. Tom Speir has still not heard back from the County Fire Marshall regarding our jointly offering free fire inspections this fall for old/historic homes in the county. He will pursue this idea.

M. Annual Preservation Awards

Tom Speir reminded everyone to be thinking about nominations for next year’s annual preservation awards.

V. Special Reports

A. 1901 Courthouse

No report, but Bill Whitis noted that work has already commenced on making the windows more water-tight.

B. Texas & Pacific Depot Museum

Robert Wood reported that the new elevator giving access to the passenger tunnel will probably be in operation in 4-5 weeks. The new entrance will be on the Ginnochio Hotel side and will provide access to a waiting room and the elevator. All remaining construction will take until well after January 1st to complete. The restrooms and track stairs will be redone as a part of this project. Tom Speir inquired about a dedication date for the renovations. Robert was not aware of any.

However, he pointed out that the Ginnochio Hotel's re-opening is coming up, hopefully this month.

C. Starr Family Home State Historic Site

Barbara Judkins reported that next Thursday from noon to 7:00 p.m. they will decorate the Starr Home for Christmas and are interested in volunteers to help with the project. The dedication on December 16th of the restored kitchen is the next major event. (That evening will also be the third annual carol-singing, which will be held on the main lot so the event can move inside if weather becomes a problem, as it did last year.) Due to intermittent (but brief!) showers the Victorian Fair was not as well-attended as hoped.

Tom Speir indicated that he has a copy of Scott Joplin's "Ragtime's Greatest Hits." He offered to supply copies to anyone interested.

D. Michelson Museum of Art

Day of the Dead. During the "Day of the Dead" observance over Halloween at the Michelson Museum, Tom Speir was able to make contact with members of Marshall's Hispanic community and talk with them about our interest in promoting their events. He reported that the Michelson's "Day of the Dead" event was considered a huge success by all parties concerned and that everyone is eager to work together on other events that will involve our county's Hispanic community.

Stars of Christmas. Tom also reported that, today, he got an email from the Michelson promoting its "Stars of Christmas" family night which will be on December 1st from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Drawing Stories. The Michelson's current exhibit is "Drawing Stories: The Picture Book Art of Maria Frazee." This exhibit will continue through December 23rd 2017.

E. Historic Landmark Preservation Board (HLPB)

The only report was that the HLPB has not met for several months due to illnesses.

VI. Other

None.

VII. Administrative

Incoming Mail. Notices have been received from Voices in Small Places and the American Association for State and Local History (also its “History News” has come).

Service Award. Tom reported with satisfaction that the replacement copy of our 2015 service award from THC has finally been received.

New Office Sign. Tom noted that our office sign in the Courthouse Annex is just a piece of paper. He has priced a new sign to include Braille lettering and Smartt Advertising can do it for \$70.42. He plans to get a sign similar to all other county ones. The purchase of a new sign was approved.

Introduction of Depot Archivist. Robert Wood introduced Kathy Wright who runs the archival department of the Depot Museum.

Facebook Page. We need new photos. Please share any that you may have.

Resources Available On-Line. The commission’s attention was called to several on-line websites. Their descriptions and addresses are as follows:

Ex-slave narratives done during the Depression (which include photographs and people who had been slaves in Harrison County):

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/voices>

An on-line guide to the Library of Congress’ American Folklife Center’s Texas materials (the actual materials are all available in the Library in Washington, D.C., and may or may not necessarily be on-line):

<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/guides/Texas.html>

American Memory is a Library of Congress website (the parent site for the ex-slave narratives) and is useful for history related to Marshall and/or Harrison County (if you search it for “Marshall Texas” you get 1,341 hits):

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

The *Jefferson Jimplicute* has been scanned and is available online at the Portal to Texas History website:

<https://texashistoryunt.edu/>

VIII. Adjournment

The next meeting will be January 11th 2018 at the T&P Depot Museum at 1:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Submitted by Richard Magrill