

HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
July 12th 2018

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, Bill T. Whitis, Barbara Judkins, Sharon Dews, Marty Vaughan, Thomas Richardson, and Gail Beil.

Visitors Present: Jack Canson and Gerald Gibson

I. Call to Order

Robert Wood, vice-chair, called the meeting to order on July 12th 2018 at 1:31 p.m. in the conference room of the T&P Depot Museum.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of June 14th 2018 were approved as distributed.

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	7,534.80
Friends of the HCHC Fund	2,192.77

Tom Speir being absent for a doctor's appointment, there was no update on the financial records of the Commission. At the last meeting, our expenses showed \$1,638 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 \$1,362.

IV. The standing committee reports are as follows:

A. Archaeology

It was noted that the 89th Conference of the Texas Archeological Society is scheduled for October 26th - 28th.

B. Archives

No report.

C. Cemeteries

Old Canaan Cemetery. Bill Whitis reported that the property owner on whose land the Old Canaan Cemetery has been located is working with the attorney that worked out the agreement to limit access to Love Cemetery. The owner was/is agreeable to the establishment of a walking trail from the church to the cemetery, but not the driveways that the church had in mind. Gerald Gibson said that one of the Rosenwald schools may have been located near the cemetery.

Texas Historic Cemetery Designations. Craver Cemetery in Harleton wants to do the work necessary to be designated as a Texas Historic Cemetery and Mike Shaw is still working on the process for Woodlawn Cemetery.

Marshall Cemetery. Bill Whitis has started cleaning some stones at Marshall Cemetery. He is working on a listing of unmarked graves there.

Private Family Cemeteries. Marty Vaughan reported that she had received a call from someone who wanted to establish a private family cemetery on their property. She directed them to the website: www.txca.us/Resources/Documents/ESTABLISHING%20A%20FAMILY%20CEMETERY.pdf. (It was noted that the laws regarding cemeteries in Texas changed last September.)

D. Education

No report.

E. Historical Markers

Marshall as the Birthplace of Boogie Woogie. Jack Canson spoke regarding the Birthplace of Boogie Woogie marker. He indicated that his concern

was not with where it is installed. He is concerned to keep the trademark of Marshall as the Birthplace of Boogie Woogie alive and he wishes to work with all involved to see that the dedication of the marker is well-done and well publicized. Before he got ill, he had conversations with Gail Beil and she talked with him about the September 1st Boogie Woogie concert for Memorial City Hall and dedication of the marker on September 2nd. He understands she has plans to continue with the concert at First United Methodist Church since Memorial City Hall will not be finished in time. He emphasized that we will have only one chance to bring the world to the installation of the marker and he wants to create an event that will carry weight with musicologists. He indicated that there is some scepticism among these professionals about what entitles Marshall to claim itself as the "birthplace." His main point is that we now have the endorsement of the Texas Historical Commission (THC) for Marshall as the birthplace through its process of approving the historical marker and need to schedule the dedication for a time when we can get the media here. From his years of experience in publicizing events, he believes that Labor Day weekend is the absolute worst weekend of the whole year to secure media attention, especially on Sunday afternoon. He doesn't have a specific alternative date in mind, but he suggested that during the Fire Ant Festival would be better than Labor Day weekend.

The question was asked: who paid for the marker? Richard Magrill indicated that it's an undertold story marker. Barbara Judkins reminded us that undertold story markers are paid for by the THC. Someone suggested that the Marshall City Commission decide the dedication date. It was mentioned that the Ginnochio Hotel restaurant is not open on Sunday and Monday.

(At this point Gail Beil arrived and some time later, before the discussion concluded, Jack Canson excused himself and left the meeting.)

Gail indicated that she has talked to the media and they are good to go with the Labor Day weekend, but she recognizes that something could happen and intervene and divert the attention from our event. She indicated that she feels the scheduling of the marker dedication is her call as chair of the Historical Marker Committee. "Of course," she said, "we could end up with 12 kids in a cave in Thailand and that would change things!" She recognizes Jack Canson's concerns, but she has talked to the media. TV stations, 12, 3, and 6 all say that they will be present for the dedication.

The marker dedication, she explained, was originally scheduled for Labor Day weekend as a part of the soft opening of the renovated Memorial City Hall.

“Now,” she said, “We’re a month and half out and need a straight answer to the question of if we can use Memorial City Hall.” Also, the Ginnocchio Hotel restaurant plans to be open for Sunday brunch for the first time on that September 2nd date. Gail believes that we can go ahead with the events even if Memorial City Hall is not finished. In the meantime, she has asked for solid answers by the August meeting of the Marshall City Commission regarding the availability of Memorial City Hall as a venue for the Boogie Woogie Concert.

There was discussion of the timing of the dedication and questions regarding some other time than Sunday afternoon of Memorial Day weekend. Gail indicated that she does not feel obligated to listen to Jack Canson’s fears regarding the dedication date, but when she gets clarifications on the availability of Memorial City Hall and the Ginnocchio brunch, she will have Tom Speir send out an email to all members of the Historical Commission for our comments and advice.

Gerald Gibson asked if the dedication of the marker took place at the time of this first Boogie Woogie Festival would it become an annual event? There was no answer as to timing of future festivals. Finally, Gail declared that “we’ve had the marker for a year and a half and we need to dedicate it.”

On motion, the Historical Commission tabled any action on this subject until we know more.

Fred Lewis Marker. Gail Beil reported that an application has been prepared for a marker relating to Fred Lewis to be installed on the grounds of the Starr Family Home State Historic Site. She indicated that actually filing the application will wait until we can talk with Tom Speir. She suggested that it would be great to unveil the marker on the occasion of next year’s Juneteenth celebration.

James Farmer, Jr. Statue. There was a question regarding the progress toward erecting a statue of James Farmer, Jr. on the western portion of the lawn of the 1901 Courthouse. Gail Beil indicated that there is around \$30,000 in possible contributions for the erection of the statue. *Note:* James Farmer, Jr. was a noted Civil Rights activist and Marshall native.

F. Historical Museum

Inez Hatley Hughes Research Library. Gail Beil indicated that the City of Marshall is willing to authorize the M(arshall) E(conomic) D(evelopment) CO(rporation) to sell the Marshall Business Center building across the street from Memorial City Hall and that it might be available for purchase by the Historical

Museum. Gerald Gibson indicated that the Marshall City Commission would need to act quickly because the Historical Museum is actively pursuing a different building and there may be a motion at the next meeting of the Historical Museum Board to finalize the choice.

G. Information Technology

Bill Whitis reported that seventeen new friends have liked our Facebook page.

H. Oral History

Barbara Judkins will send Sharon Dews a copy of the powerpoint presentation from the June workshop on oral history.

I. Preservation

Port Caddo Historical Marker Location. Gerald Gibson noted that at our last meeting there was a report on a June 7th conference at Caddo Lake State Park where the Port Caddo historical marker is currently located and that from that meeting it was decided that the actual site of Port Caddo is not in the Park but in the Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge at the location of the former pumping station for Thiokol Chemical Corporation. However, he reported that more than ninety percent of Port Caddo was located within the Park called into question the plan to move the marker from the Park to the Refuge.

J. Publications

No report.

K. Tourism

Monthly Community Calendar. Robert Wood shared the monthly community calendar. All organizations are encouraged to share their activities with the community calendar of area events. The calendar is sponsored and mailed out by the Marshall Regional Arts Council and is prepared by Dr. Brenda Dearman, a retired music professor from East Texas Baptist University.

L. Goals

No report.

M. Annual Preservation Awards

Gail Beil indicated that she has nominated Alan Loudermilk for the THC's Award of Merit for his work in preserving the Ginnochio Hotel.

V. Special Reports

A. 1901 Courthouse

No report.

B. Texas & Pacific Depot Museum

Station Agent. Robert Wood noted that the station is now unmanned. A kiosk for purchase of tickets is on the way. There is a student who meets the trains and does what he can. The former ticket agent in Marshall has gone to Longview.

T&P Caboose. The museum is looking toward having a key which can be used to secure to the caboose on the depot grounds.

T&P Shop Fire. The images of the 1971 fire which destroyed the T&P Shops and that were discussed at the last meeting have been determined to be still images contained on slides and not moving pictures. Subsequent to our meeting, the following email appeal was sent out:

To the Harrison County Historical Society:

Upon discovering that the Marshall Fire Department had numerous photographs taken when the Marshall T&P Shops burned on April 1, 1971, the Museum Depot Board moved to secure and preserve these photographs. MFD has agreed to let the Museum Board have these photographs. It is the Board's intent to have a display of this event at the museum in the near future. The Board will have the photographs professionally converted to digital media. As this will be a large undertaking, the Board would appreciate any help from the Historical Society, monetary or otherwise. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Thank you again-

Cathy Wright, Museum Director

C. Starr Family Home State Historic Site

Barbara Judkins reported that the enclosed back porch is no longer enclosed, has been restored to its original appearance, and looks great. Also, that the figs are ripe!

D. Michelson Museum of Art

Barbara Judkins noted that there is a reception tonight at the Michelson to open the annual Hoover Watercolor Society exhibit. The exhibit showcases award winning paintings from local and regional artists and will run until August 25th.

E. Historic Landmark Preservation Board (HLPB)

Preservation Texas Meeting in August. The Preservation Texas regional meeting will be held in Nacogdoches in August. Its emphasis will be on African-American history and related architecture.

VI. Other

Building of the First Masonic Lodge in Hallsville. Thomas Richardson shared his report on the building of the first Masonic Lodge in Hallsville. It opened in 1871. The builders were Dozier Prothro and George E. Teate. Prothro lived to be 87. Teate died in 1873 at the young age of 33. He came to Jefferson at the end of the Civil War with his wife and young children. He had been in the C.B. 11th Cavalry C.S.A. of Virginia. He was a flag bearer and stood close to seven feet tall. The railroad came to Hallsville in August of 1869, a move backed by Teate, because he was a carpenter and there were lots of buildings and dwellings to be built as a result of its arrival.

Teate and Prothro were hired to build the Masonic Lodge (just east of the present building). Sy Cregton helped them. Building and construction slowed in 1872 when the railroad shops moved east to Marshall and the railroad itself continued its westward expansion. Teate went to work hauling freight out of Jefferson and Dallas.

Early in 1873, he was returning with a freight wagon when the flooded Trinity River delayed their progress. He slept in a cold wet bottom for a week and caught pneumonia. Brought back to his home in Hallsville after the delivery was complete, he was weak and slow to recover. A carpetbagger-type tax collector came to his house and said that he owed taxes and would have to pay. He got up out of bed to attend this matter, and it was figured that is what caused him to have a relapse. He died at age 33.

His wife Martha was so grieved and upset, she decided to go live near her brother who resided in the neighborhood of Ennis. She loaded a covered wagon with as much as she could and made the long trip to Bristol in Ellis County with a twelve-year-old girl and ten-year-old boy.

VII. Administrative

Communications. No report.

Facebook Page. As always, we need photos for our Facebook page. Bill Whitis is doing an excellent job on keeping it updated.

VIII. Adjournment

The next meeting will be August 9th 2018 at the T&P Depot Museum at 1:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.

Submitted by Richard Magrill