

**HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**August 9<sup>th</sup> 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:** Tom Speir, Richard Magrill, Rose Mary Magrill, Bill T. Whitis, Ann Brannon, Jean Birmingham, Thomas Richardson, and Gail Beil.

**Visitor(s) Present:** Christian Cope.

**I. Call to Order**

Tom Speir, chair, called the meeting to order on August 9<sup>th</sup> 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 July 12<sup>th</sup> 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	7,534.99
Friends of the HCHC Fund	2,692.83

Tom Speir reported on the financial records of the Commission. Our expenses showed \$2,025 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 \$975.

#### **IV. The standing committee reports are as follows:**

##### **A. Archaeology**

Tom Speir emphasized that October, which is Texas Archeological Month, will soon be here and asked that any events which are planned be submitted as soon as possible. We hope to coordinate events with Barbara Judkins. The Texas Archeological Research Lab (TARL) has recently reviewed the fees connected with its repository. Curation fees are going up, Tom reported, but we do not curate anything with them. The fee for recording sites is also going up, but Tom is able to record ours for free. The 89<sup>th</sup> Texas Archeological Society meeting is scheduled for October 26<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>.

##### **B. Archives**

Tom Speir reported that the newly donated filing cabinet is not yet in use due to the lack of time to deal with filing. The collection of archeological materials in the office will be transferred to Texas Parks and Wildlife.

##### **C. Cemeteries**

***May Bell Oakley Marker.*** Bill Whitis reported that he had been contacted by a relative of May Bell Oakley who had found the reference to her in *Family of Faith: Cumberland Presbyterians in Harrison County 1848-1998* by Rose Mary Magrill. May Bell died at the age of sixteen in 1896 while in Marshall visiting relatives and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery. The relative who made the contact is installing a marker for her grave.

***Young Cemetery.*** Young Cemetery which is located behind El Mexicano Restaurant on TX154 has also been the subject of an inquiry. The cemetery was in use up until the 1970s at which time there were about ten headstones.

***Waskom Area Cemetery.*** Bill had a lady call about a cemetery south of Waskom that she thought was going to be damaged by a pipeline. He was never able to locate the cemetery and saw no evidences of pipeline construction. Ann Brannon suggested that Walter and Wanda Fugler, who live near there, might be able to help.

***Greenwood Cemetery Confederate Graves.*** Ann Brannon reported that the graves of three Confederate soldiers and the wife of a Confederate soldier have recently been marked in Greenwood.

#### **D. Education**

No report.

#### **E. Historical Markers**

***Hebrew Cemetery Historic Texas Cemetery Marker.*** The Historic Texas Cemetery marker for the Hebrew Cemetery in Marshall has arrived. Bill Whitis indicated that he will need a little help with installation. Tom Speir volunteered to help.

***Trammel's Trace Marker.*** The possibility of securing a marker for Trammel's Trace was discussed. Tom Speir reported on an email from Gary Pinkerton which noted that Pope City Road was a part of the old route of Trammel's Trace and that there are various locations along the road which show actual ruts. Tom suggested that rather than seek permission about where to place the marker on private property that we ask the county to name the whole stretch a historic site and maybe locate the marker on any available county property along the road that would have room for a turnout. He indicated that we may want to apply for the marker as an "undertold story."

***Update on Approved Markers.*** Tom Speir reported that we have received approval for the marker for the Booker T. Washington School in Elysian Fields and now have to get approval for the text. The text for the markers for Young's Mill Pond and Bishop College need proofing which may take a while. The text for the First State Bank of Hallsville is in the queue for being written. A draft should be ready by the fall.

***Increase in Application Fees and Marker Costs.*** Tom reported that for 2019 marker applications, the application fee will be required up front and that the cost of markers is being increased.

***Undertold Story Applications.*** Tom reported that we are more or less prepared to apply for a couple of markers which would fall into the "undertold story" category, but we should apply for only one at a time. The two possibilities are (1) Waskom as the Gateway to Texas and (2) the Barrymore Shooting in Marshall. On motion, the application for the Waskom marker is to be the priority, since there is no other historical marker in that municipality.

***Marshall as the Birthplace of Boogie Woogie.*** Gail Beil reported that she and Alan Loudermilk will be meeting to iron out the final program for Sunday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> to dedicate both the new Boogie Woogie marker and the restored

T&P Railway marker. The actual dedication of the markers is expected to take place around 2 p.m. and John Tennison and perhaps others will begin a concert after the dedication which will last until John says its time to go. The Depot will be open for tours. The price of the concert will be \$20 and all proceeds will go to the Depot Museum. Preliminary arrangements to be completed include setting the markers in place, painting “Marshall – Birthplace of Boogie Woogie” or whatever is finally decided on the west side of the viaduct (or on the supporting beams beneath the viaduct), and completion of the advertising campaign. Tom Speir will be the master of ceremonies for the marker dedications and Jack Canson will be asked to speak as a part of the festivities. Our commission will pay the cost of the dedication programs. A logo is being designed that can be used to promote Marshall as the Birthplace of Boogie Woogie. An annual concert to be named “Boogie Woogie: The Roots” is being planned for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in April. Gail will email the final arrangements to commission members.

***Fred Lewis Marker.*** There was no update at this meeting on applying for a marker relating to Fred Lewis to be installed on the grounds of the Starr Family Home State Historic Site.

***James Farmer, Jr. Statue.*** There was no update on work toward erecting a statue of James Farmer, Jr. on the western portion of the lawn of the 1901 Courthouse. *Note:* James Farmer, Jr. was a noted Civil Rights activist and Marshall native.

## **F. Historical Museum**

***Inez Hatley Hughes Research Library.*** Jean Birmingham indicated that the Historical Museum is still in the process of exploring options for the new location of its research collection. Gail Beil indicated that, depending on who you talk to, the City of Marshall will sell its Business Development Center building to the Museum for use for the research collection, but it will want to reserve the back part of the building. It is understood that the Museum will operate the facility to its financial benefit including any rent from existing tenants. The sales price will need to be negotiated to the satisfaction of the Museum.

***Annual Luncheon Lecture Series.*** Jean announced that the annual luncheon lecture series will be held on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of October. The luncheon on the 11<sup>th</sup> will focus on Rosborough Springs. The luncheon on 25<sup>th</sup> will focus on the T&P Railway.

***Military Exhibits.*** Jean also noted that the Historical Museum is still waiting on the renovations to Memorial City Hall to reach a point where its military exhibits can finally be installed. (Subsequent to our meeting the installation of the exhibits began.)

### **G. Information Technology**

Bill Whitis reported our minutes are getting posted to the county website on a regular basis and that another fifty followers/new friends have liked our Facebook page. In his travels he is trying to find stories for our page. If you know of subjects for stories especially involving parts of the county other than Marshall please let him know.

### **H. Oral History**

Tom Speir indicated that nothing is being done in the area of oral history and asked that we be on the lookout for any potential volunteers.

### **I. Preservation**

***National Preservation Institute (NPI) Seminars.*** Tom Speir called attention to the upcoming NPI seminars to be held in Austin during October. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> there is a seminar on “Conservation Strategies for Archeologists” and on the 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> there is a seminar on “Archeological Curation and Collections Management.” The advanced registration deadline is September 10<sup>th</sup> 2018 and the final registration deadline is October 5<sup>th</sup>. For further information you may contact NPI at 703-765-0100 and [info@npi.org](mailto:info@npi.org).

### **J. Publications**

Gerald Gibson is doing a report on the Rosenwald Schools in Harrison County at the upcoming meeting of Preservation Texas in Nacogdoches (August 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>). Tony Crosby and Gary Insley will also be present for this meeting. Also, Tom Speir is making a budget request for county funds to replace the Stagecoach Trace markers.

### **K. Tourism**

***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 (bdearman8@gmail.com), 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. However, THC says the nomination should be in a different category. She continues to work on this nomination.

**V. Special Reports**

**A. 1901 Courthouse**

Tom Speir indicated that there is no report. However, he has received an email addressed to him and County Judge Hugh Taylor regarding a Courthouse Stewardship Workshop to be held in Groveton. All are invited. He has forwarded this information to Richard and Christina Anderson and has copies of the agenda for those who are interested.

**B. Texas & Pacific Depot Museum**

No report.

**C. Starr Family Home State Historic Site**

No report.

**D. Michelson Museum of Art**

The annual Hoover Watercolor Society exhibit which showcases award winning paintings from local and regional artists and will run until August 25<sup>th</sup>.

**E. Historic Landmark Preservation Board (HLPB)**

*Former First Presbyterian Church Property.* It was announced that there is a hearing tonight to consider making the two plots containing the old First Presbyterian Church building a locally designated historic property which would have the effect of making it permanently exempt from property taxes.

## **VI. Other**

Nothing was reported under this category.

## **VII. Administrative**

**Membership Renewals.** Tom Speir reported that our memberships/ contributions have been completed for the Historical Museum, National Trust for Historic Preservation, American Association for State and Local History, Texas State Historical Association, East Texas Historical Association, Texas Archeological Society, and T&P Depot Museum, leaving only the Michelson Art Museum to be completed.

**Inventory.** Tom also reported that Bill Whitis has completed the inventory of all the county equipment in the possession of the commission.

**Commission Sign.** There was discussion of having our standup sign located someplace other than our office, especially a venue where it might be seen when not in use for specific commission functions. There was discussion of various places with no conclusion reached.

**East Texas Historical Association.** It was noted that the East Texas Historical Association will hold its fall meeting on October 11<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup>. Gail Beil will be presenting a paper on C.G. Lancaster.

**Hurricane Harvey Relief Funds.** It was also noted that the THC may receive up to \$12.3M in federal funding to assist in addressing the impacts of Hurricane Harvey on significant historic properties. THC would like to receive information on how such funding can further recovery in specific communities. The application will be made to the National Park Service.

**Bone.** Ann Brannon reported the discovery of a bone within the precincts of Greenwood Cemetery. Tom Speir recommended that she place the bone in a Tupperware container and take it to the county coroner who can tell if it is human. Tom noted that forensic archeology has made great advancements in deriving information from bones, including sex, age, diet, *etc.*

**Save Texas History Symposium.** It was noted that the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Save Texas History Symposium on “San Antonio and the Alamo: Connecting Texas for Three Centuries” will be held on Friday and Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> at the Menger Hotel in San Antonio.

*Jefferson Civil War Symposium.* Tom reminded everyone that the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Jefferson Civil War Symposium will be convening in that city in two days time.

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

*Spending Decisions.* Various spending subjects were discussed. On motion, the commission will — contribute \$400 to the T&P Depot Museum for the copying and preservation of pictures of the T&P Shop Fire, donate \$100 to the Michelson Art Museum for its work in caring for and making available its collections and providing educational opportunities for adults and children, and invest \$300 in generic signs for cemeteries in the county aimed at guiding persons who wish to determine the proper procedures for burials.

### **VIII. Adjournment**

The next meeting will be September 13<sup>th</sup> 2018 at the T&P Depot Museum at 1:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 3:16 p.m.

**Submitted by Richard Magrill**