

HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

May 13th 2021

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, Marty Vaughan, Becky Palmer, and Barbara Judkins.

Visitor(s) Present: None.

I. Call to Order

Tom Speir, chair, called the Zoom meeting to order on May 13th 2021 at 1:36 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the Zoom meeting of January 13, 2021 were approved as distributed. (There was no March meeting.)

III. County Budget Report

Tom Speir reported that from the \$4,000 included in the county budget for the fiscal year running from October 2020 through September 2021 we have \$3,382 remaining. He noted that we are half way through our year. Last year we purchased 15 Stagecoach Trace signs. He suggested that we purchase another 30. The markers have a 10 year warranty. Barbara Judkins promised to try to get some of the new markers posted before her knee replacement. She asked for prayer for her husband's patience. (She confessed that he is, in fact, a very patient person.) Tom noted that we are trying to do a reprint of the historical marker booklet as well as the brochure outlining the Stagecoach Trace.

IV. The standing committee reports are as follows:

A. Archaeology

Old Canaan Cemetery. Earnol Brewster has a Texas Tech team down to work in the county. It was able to locate approximately 120 unmarked graves at the Old Canaan Cemetery. The cemetery appears to be much larger than the area Tom and Earnol were originally directed to by the family. The church and school were probably north of the cemetery area. That area has really grown over but can be accessed through the cemetery. There is a clearly marked pathway to the cemetery now. There is one ditch or gully that might be problematic for some.

B. Archives and Historic Survey

Steve Horton is looking for buildings that might qualify for the National Register. He has been looking at the files on Wiley College and has made a short list of the buildings that are pre-1971 and still extant. So many of their buildings have burned or been razed that the list is fairly sparse. Steve says that records are spotty.

He is planning on going to look at buildings in Waskom.

C. Cemeteries

Saint Joseph Catholic Cemetery Bill Whitis reports: "I have begun a project on a group of Loose Papers I found and am going through on Saint Joseph Catholic Cemetery in Marshall. I have scanned some older lot sketches from the past and have begun compiling them along with older funeral records into a single map of burials at their site. At the same time I have been adding to the listings on Findagrave.com of burials previously not listed, including those found in old newspaper clippings but not in church records (some previously listed as unknown or 'hobo' records).

The cemetery has been expanded several times since the museum library's records were last updated and I will be working with the church to get an updated record of burials and newer map information, including the land expansion from about a year ago, to go into the files at the Inez Hatley Hughes Research Library.

D. Education

History Fair. Barbara Cox reports that there were 21 entries in the History Fair this year and that it was covered in the *Marshall News Messenger*. Marshall Junior High School attributed the small number of entries to the increase in teacher absences and communication problems brought on by the Covid-19 virus.

E. Historical Markers

Tom Speir reported that the applications prepared for Woodlawn as a Historic Texas Cemetery and for a marker for Saint Paul Episcopal Mission in Leigh (both by Rose Mary Magrill) have been filed for this year. Tom has also done an application for the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, so we have three marker applications sent in for this year. Rose Mary is in contact with Shelby Ware and is beginning work on an application for Golden Rule Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Elysian Fields which will be submitted next year. ? and Tom are working on getting a TxDOT sign directing folks to the Booker T. Washington School Marker in Elysian Fields. Barbara Judkins reported that work is ongoing regarding work toward the dedication of the Young's Mill Pond historical marker. Tommy Goforth in Hallsville has finally received the marker for the old bank that he uses as an office building.

F. Harrison County Historical Museum/ Inez Hatley Hughes Research Library

Becky Palmer reported that the research library hopes to go on-line through the museum website soon. Children's Day Camp "History Rocks" will begin at 3:30 p.m. on June 21st and run through the 25th. The local history rotating space "Places in the Heart" in Memorial City Hall is still featuring Harleton but will be replaced by Karnack/Uncertain in August. The woman's suffrage exhibit in Texas will be followed by one on women inventors. The membership drive is always on the 1st of May and the museum is awaiting its results.

G. Information Technology

Tom Speir reported that there is nothing new going on in the area of information technology. He is keeping up with the minutes on the county website and Bill Whitis is keeping up with the Facebook page.

H. Oral History

Tom Speir reported that Randi Leffall has come up with a list of people to interview in Elysian Fields. Chris Gunstream, a new commission member, has the recording equipment.

I. Preservation/Rosenwald Schools

No report.

J. Publications

Tom Speir noted that the Wise County Historical Society has been selling calendar's celebrating their James Riely Gordon courthouse.

He also shared a communication from J. Dale West of Longview regarding his publications.

See also III. County Budget Report for Historical Marker Booklet and Stagecoach Trace Brochure.

K. Tourism

Tom Speir noted that the Josephine Davidson Memorial Convocation and lecture will be at 11 a.m. this Saturday, May 15th. He called attention to the continuing need to make the WWII Veterans Highway signs on US80 more visible. The master gardeners think it will cost up to \$200 per sign for supplies to create the flower beds that have been suggested. Tom believes that making the signs more visible will help to promote the recognition of WWII veterans.

L. Goals

Earnol Brewster reported that he has now added Canaan, Galilee and Pleasant Hill to the Texas Freedom Colony Project list for Harrison County.

M. Annual Preservation Awards

Tom Speir reported that our awards along with the HLPB awards will be presented this Sunday, May 16th at 1:30 p.m. in the 1901 Harrison County courthouse.

V. Partners in Preservation Reports

A. 1901 Courthouse

No report.

B. Texas & Pacific Depot Museum

Tom Speir reported that that the Dollars for the Depot fundraiser is ongoing.

C. Starr Family Home State Historic Site

Barbara Judkins reported that the site's annual Fairy Garden event is coming up and that they are looking forward to Rachel Gibson from Hallsville joining the staff.

D. Michelson Museum of Art

Tom Speir reported that the Michelson has its doors partially open. There is currently an exhibit on expressionists.

E. Historic Landmark Preservation Board (HLPB)

See IV. M. Annual Preservation Awards (above)

HLPB awards will be presented this weekend.

F. Others (Sabine Farms, T.C. Lindsey Store, Main Street, Pemberton Heritage Center, colleges/schools, etc.)

T.C. Lindsay Store.

Marty Vaughan notes that the T.C. Lindsay Store is still not open. Work is progressing on finishing the new handicapped access. The electrical upgrading is partially complete and there are hopes to add air conditioning.

VI. Other

VII. Administrative

Tom Speir announced that Michael Smith is taking care of the Friends of the Harrison County Historical Commission accounts and that Anjeeta King is doing the work.

Tom announced the passing of Margaret Agnor, a member and former chair of the commission.

We have received two issues of the Southwestern Historical Quarterly and of Preservation magazine. We have also received an issue of The Medallion.

Our sign is on display at Central Perks.

VIII. Adjournment

Tom Speir announced that the next meeting will be July 8th 2021 at 1:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Submitted by Richard Magrill