

# HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

## Meeting Minutes

May 11<sup>th</sup> 2023

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, Richard Magrill, Rose Mary Magrill, Steve McFarland, Bill Elliot, Scott Barmore, Audrey Kariel, Robert Wood, Steve Horton, and Marty Vaughan.

**Visitor(s) Present:** Anjetta King, Registered Agent for the Friends.

### **I. Call to Order**

Tom Speir, chair, called the Zoom meeting to order on May 11<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 1:35 p.m.

### **II. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the Zoom meeting of March 9<sup>th</sup> 2023 were approved.

### **III. County Budget Report**

Tom Speir reported that the County Budget in May showed a favorable balance of \$3,267.45, or 65.35%. However, this did not reflect the money we have already spent getting historical markers re-inked.

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

#### **A. Archaeology**

Tom Speir offered to order materials for Texas Archeological Month. He also advised that the THC is offering to put any event on their statewide calendar.

## **B. Archives and Historic Survey**

Tom Speir reported that the filing cabinets in the new room are proving useful. He also reported that he got us a small toolkit for assembling file hangers, etc.

## **C. Cemeteries**

Tom Speir reported that the Woodlawn Cemetery received and installed their Historic Texas Cemetery marker in April. We were also asked to confirm the location of the Ham Cemetery, which is off of TX 43 near Grange Hall and we were asked about a sign for the Koon-Dickard Cemetery just north of Hallsville. Finally, we are working on a Cemetery Directory for Harrison County that will only include about 70 of our over 200 cemeteries. (We are avoiding cemeteries on private property!) This directory is at the request of the THC in their Annual Reports. The City of Marshall has taken care of fallen trees in Marshall and Greenwood cemeteries and we are trying to get damaged graves restored.

## **D. Education**

No report.

## **E. Historical Markers**

**Miscellaneous.** Scott Barmore reported that the historical marker for the old fire bell at the Marshall Central Fire Station is being corrected. Tom Speir reported that Marshall is proceeding with the marker for the Barrymore shooting and that it will be located at the depot. The Undertold Story application for the Leigh Health Center is also ongoing. The New Hope Baptist Church marker has been approved.

**Refinishing Markers.** Cherry Fisher has been busy refinishing markers. Bill Elliot reported that Marshall Monument has finished re-inking the three markers on the 1901 Courthouse Square. Their bid did not cover that these were two-sided but they did the work and stood on their bid. But going forward if markers are two-sided it will cost more for the work. The pink granite markers Bill would like to see re-inked in the next cycle are General Hawthorn in Greenwood Cemetery (one-sided and still readable if you work on it), Confederate Missouri Capital at 402 South Bolivar (set facing the afternoon west sun and one-sided), and Governor Pendleton Murrah at 1207 South Washington (two-sided and unreadable). The refinishing of these three markers was approved.

**C.G. Lancaster Marker.** Next Tuesday the 16<sup>th</sup> will be the dedication of the C.G. Lancaster marker at Marshall Memorial City Hall Auditorium at 12M. Barbara Judson and possibly Veronique Ramirez will be there. (The event was later reported in the *Marshall News Messenger*:

Marshall's Memorial City Hall officially unveiled its new historical marker honoring Marshall native Cornelius Granbery Lancaster, the architect for the original building.

"Memorial City Hall is honored to have a plaque recognizing the architect of our historic venue," said MCH Director Glenn Barnhart, "We are very proud that the City of Marshall saved and restored such a beautiful building and that C.G. Lancaster's legacy will be preserved for future generations."

Lancaster designed a number of structures locally that still stand today, with many recognized as registered Texas historic landmarks by the Texas Historical Commission.

This includes the Ginocchio Hotel (1898), the Weisman-Hirsch Home (1901) and the historic Harrison County courthouse (1900), which was designed by J. Riely Gordon but with construction supervised by Lancaster, who also supervised its renovation in 1914 and 1917.

Lancaster also designed high school buildings for Henderson (1916), Marshall (1917), Overton (1916), Waskom (1924), Mineola (1924), Mineral Wells (1913) and Avinger (1935), in addition to a number of elementary schools in East Texas.

Municipal and commercial buildings in Marshall designed by Lancaster also include the Marshall City Hall (1910) and its replacement (1922, after a fire burned the 1910 structure), Joe Weisman and Company, Marshall Mill and Elevator Company, the Hawley Building, the [old] Elks Building, the Coca-Cola bottling plant (1920) and Temple Moses Montefiore (1900, razed 1973). Lancaster also designed banks and commercial buildings in Jefferson, Pittsburg, Henderson and Carthage.

Like many other Marshallites, the Great Depression hit Lancaster hard and he closed his business, later going to work in 1937 as a supervisor for the Work Projects Administration. Lancaster died on December 1, 1947, and is buried in Marshall.

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

The Historical Museum is working on the Smithsonian traveling exhibit.

### **G. Information Technology**

Tom Speir reported that we are testing five different QR codes for five different historical markers in the downtown Marshall area.

### **H. Oral History**

Randi Leffall reported that he has completed interviews with both Steve Woodley and Gerald Gibson and that finally he was able to make contact with commission member Thomas Richardson over in Hallsville and will be interviewing him on May 10<sup>th</sup>. (Pre-production conversations with his daughter seem to indicate that this will be a great oral history contribution about Hallsville.)

### **I. Preservation/Rosenwald Schools**

No report.

### **J. Publications**

Tom Speir showed the newly published cemetery directory and the reprinted Sabine Farms brochure. We are down to two boxes and need to consider doing a reprint of the historical marker booklet. On motion, we will reprint 1,000 copies of our Historic Markers booklet (without any color to save money).

### **K. Tourism**

The speaker for the spring Davidson Chapel meeting was announced. Glenn Young is the Pastor of First Baptist Church in Kilgore. He holds a bachelor of science degree from the University of Southwestern Louisiana, now the University of Louisiana, Lafayette; a master of religious education degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; and a doctor of ministry degree in theology from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He has served Baptist Churches in Texas and Louisiana. He and his wife Danielle have three children and one grandchild. He currently serves on the executive board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Texas Christian Life Commission. His well-known preaching and public speaking skills will insure a impressive program for all those attending.

On a country road between Harleton and Gilmer, the Josephine Davidson Memorial Chapel was constructed to honor the mother of one of Harrison County's most outstanding jurists and political figures. Judge T. Whitfield

Davidson, who self-educated, “read law,” then passed the Texas Bar Exam, served as City Attorney in Marshall, Texas State Senator, Lt. Governor and ran for Governor of Texas in 1924 on a platform attacking the Ku Klux Klan, which was then attempting to take over many state offices. Though he failed to win the governor’s chair, he was appointed Federal District Judge by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and continued his battle against vigilante justice until he was in his 90s.

Childless, in 1955 Davidson decided to use his wealth to honor his mother by building a stone chapel in her name on the farm where he was born. He intended it to last forever, he said, and was buried there in 1974, two years shy of his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

When he established the Davidson Foundation, he gave its trustees two tasks: 1. maintaining the chapel and 2. holding two public gatherings each year. One gathering was to be in the fall (third Saturday in September) where someone “learned in the Constitution and laws of the land” would speak, and one in the spring (third Saturday in May) for a celebration of “the faith of our fathers.” Reflecting, perhaps, on his own memories of arduous trips to the county seat from the country, he made sure the guests at each gathering would be fed before they left the grounds.

To reach the chapel from Marshall, travel north on Texas 154 to Harleton, there turn onto FM 450 North and follow it northward (toward Ore City) until it meets the Davidson Road (a TxDOT sign marks the turn), then turn left from FM 450 onto Davidson Road and follow it until it intersects the entrance to the chapel property, which is marked with a sign for the entrance. From Gilmer take Texas 154 south to Harleton and follow the same directions. From Longview, take Alpine Road (FM 2208) to Harleton and then follow the same instructions.

The Foundation’s trustees invite the public to enjoy this unique East Texas tradition in one of our area’s most picturesque settings.

**L. Goals**

No report.

**M. Annual Preservation Awards**

The Annual Preservation Awards presentation was reported in the Wednesday, May 24<sup>th</sup> *Marshall News Messenger*:

The Harrison County Historical Commission, along with the Marshall Historic Landmark preservation Board, hosted their annual joint historic preservation awards ceremony Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup> honoring individuals, architects and contractors who have made significant contributions to the restoration and preservation of local historical sites.

“For her extraordinary efforts in the preservation of the T&P (Texas and Pacific) Depot, the 1901 courthouse, and numerous other downtown projects, the Marjorie Perkins Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award for 2023 goes to Christina Anderson,” said HCHC member and director of Starr Family Home State Historic Site Barbara Judkins as she announced this year’s award recipient.

Judkins noted that the award presented to Anderson is named in honor of Marjorie Bryant Perkins, a well-known pioneering preservationist and community activist of Harrison County and Marshall, who served on the HCHC board for more than 40 years and founded the Friends of the Starr Home annual croquet tournament.

“This award named in her honor recognizes an individual for outstanding volunteer service to historic preservation, downtown revitalization, heritage tourism or community service,” said Judkins.

The HCHC’s second award given, the Award of Merit, was presented to Marshall City Manager Terrell Smith.

“This award recognizes the efforts and/or contributions of an individual or organization involved in preserving Harrison County’s cultural and historical resources,” said Judkins. “For his willingness to work with city and county residents in the preservation of historic sites in Marshall, the Harrison County Historical Commission Award of Merit for 2023 goes to our very own city manager Terrell Smith.”

Smith expressed how honored he was to be this year’s recipient. He thanked all for their efforts in preserving the town’s history.

“I did get my master’s degree in history, so history is very important to me and I’m just thankful for all the work that you all (have done),” the city manager said.

Former county judge Richard Anderson applauded the fairly new city manager for his efforts.

“Our city manager has been here for a year, and he’s already made a mark,” said Anderson, noting how much Smith is appreciated.

HCHC’s final award, the Max Lale Award for historic preservation, was presented to HCHC and HLPB member Jay Carriker.

Named in honor of former HCHC chairman, journalist, historian and author Max S. Lale, this award recognizes an individual, organization

or project that has significantly contributed to the understanding or preservation of Harrison County's cultural and historical resources, Judkins noted.

Categories include restoration, preservation or rehabilitation projects and non-construction projects such as books, a scholarly paper, presentation and educational or media achievement.

"For his work in coordinating the efforts of the Harrison County Historical Commission with that of the city of Marshall's Historic Landmark Preservation Board, the 2023 Max Lale Award goes to our very own Jay Carriker," said Judkins.

Carriker shared his enthusiasm, describing the achievement as amazing.

"I did not personally know Max Lale, but I grew up collecting and visiting sites on the Max Lale History Trail, one of our two history trails, along with the Rebecca Buard Trail," said Carriker.

"Being able to work with all these other wonderful people that have been here for a long time like Christina Anderson and build relationships and also Audrey Kariel and (the late) Jean Birmingham and also seeing new people like Terrell (Smith) come in that care about our history and our culture and care about preserving it for future generations, it is just amazing," said Carriker. "I think that our history in Marshall has a bright future."

## **V. Partners in Preservation Reports**

### **A. 1901 Courthouse**

Richard and Christina Anderson are working on a big replacement historical marker for the 1901 Courthouse.

### **B. Texas & Pacific Depot Museum**

Robert Wood reported that the depot is ready to kick off its financial campaign. They are now able to plan for six months to a year and make long range plans for structural work.

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

No report. [Barbara Judkins has a doctor's appointment today.]

### **D. Michelson Museum of Art**

No report.

## **E. Historic Landmark Preservation Board (HLPB)99**

Jay Cariker made the report from the HLPB as follows:

### ***Buard History Trail Markers***

The City of Marshall approved a Memorandum of Understanding drafted by Sam Moseley to be signed by property owners before signs are replaced or confirmed in place for the Buard Trail. This will help the city protect its property and make sure that the signs are not arbitrarily removed by property owners. However, we do anticipate that not every property owner will sign and we are working on alternate sites to acknowledge in the trail.

Fundraising letters were mailed for the markers and we have already received our first response.

The city does not have funds to help us reprint the existing brochure to meet current requests. We intend to work with the Historical Commission on the new trail and on a successor to our joint "We're Out to Landmark Marshall Preserve America Brochure." We would like to renew our relationship with the Commission and look forward to rekindling this collaboration at the beginning of your next fiscal year.

### ***City Services Marker/Funding Historical Markers***

We were unable to proceed with the City Services Historical Marker this year. The owners of the building, Denise and Howard Lee, are interested in city landmark status for the building. We are working on a proposal for a public-private partnership program for funding historical markers to present to the city manager that would help fund:

1. Historical markers on lots that have completed the landmarking process, been awarded landmark status, and whose owners are in good standing with their stewardship of the landmark. (e.g. T&P Depot)

2. Historical markers within the city limits of Marshall that have been previously awarded by the THC but have been destroyed, damaged, or lost. (e.g. Gregg-Furrrh-Elder House; Robert W. Loughery, Civil War Editor)

3. Historical markers that are to be placed on or adjacent to property owned by the City of Marshall. (e.g. C.G. Lancaster)

Requests for funding must be solicited from and approved by the Historic Landmark Preservation Board and forwarded to the City Council for consideration. While the City of Marshall may facilitate and hold donations for application fees for historical markers, City monies may not be used to pay for application fees for markers not on city property.

### ***Certificates of Appropriateness***

We are working on preliminary meetings with two property owners about Certificates of Appropriateness for two downtown properties.

### ***T&P Hospital Demolition***

We are working with the owners through Marcial Avelar to save architectural features of the building from its upcoming demolition, with the urns that cap the entrance as our first and primary salvage target. Christina Anderson is working with the Depot Board to see if they can receive these elements for preservation on site with the possibility of reconfiguring some of them into a monument honoring the T&P workers with a goal of eventually having markers for the T&P Hospital and T&P Shops on either side of the monument. Any expertise or resources that can help with this effort are welcome, but needed as soon as possible.

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

#### ***T.C. Lindsay Store.***

No report. [Marty was in on the zoom meeting when we began, but she was in a hospital room with her sister and was not available by the time we reached this agenda item.].

### **VI. Other**

No report.

### **VII. Administrative**

Tom reported that we have received the latest East Texas Historical Journal and that he will meet with County Judge Chad Sims as a beginning is made toward plans for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. No solid information is expected from the State of Texas before late summer or early fall.

### **VIII. Adjournment**

Tom Speir announced that the next meeting will be July 13<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 1:30 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.

**Submitted by Richard Magrill**