

Hays County Historical Commission  
Good Ranch, Dripping Springs  
Marvin Williams & Lynn Osler  
March 25, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kate Johnson at 6:20 pm pool side, in a spectacular hill country setting as the setting sun casting long fingers of light through the old oak trees giving a soft glow to the horses munching peacefully in the pasture. It highlighted Isham Good's grave lying next to the pasture, a testament to one man's commitment to the land he loved.



Announcements: We will have meeting first, adjourn to see artifacts of ranch on property and then hear from Pam Stephenson on oral history, Marvin Williams and Mike W. Christal about the Good Ranch.

Please sign the Clear Springs and Limestone Ledges book, which we will be presenting to the homeowners.

There will be no meeting in April. We will meet in May at the Kyle Old City Hall.

Shirts and bags for the Old Hays County Jail are in.

There will be no digging for now at Lone Man Creek. TPW says tree roots cannot be disturbed in or out of the creek bed. Lee Ann Story will check for archeological deposits.

October is archeology month. HCHC will have workshops lead by Lee Ann Story.

May is National Carriage and Driving month. Double C Ranch has extended an invitation for festivities.

Shelley Henry moved to accept the February minutes. Linda Coker seconded. The minutes were accepted and are posted on our website.

Richard Kidd met in San Marcos with the Whitliff collection lady at Texas State to discuss Buck Winn. The project is ongoing. Richard Kidd has transferred all slides and stills to digital. Work is proceeding. He also announced we have a new web master.

Courthouse Committee chair Linda Coker said HCHC will be leading tours of the courthouse for Employee Appreciation lunch on April 13 during concurrent sessions. April 28 set up El Camino Real display. Courthouse will be on May 1 & 2 Heritage Tour. Need docents for that. May 15 San Marcos Western Swing festival will have info on jail restoration.

Historical Marker chair Betty Harrison reported all marker applications were approved by THC in January; the Medie Kyle house in San Marcos and Lane house in Wimberley, San Pedro and Jacob's Well cemeteries. Markers for three have been paid and ordered, but Kyle house owners have decided not to pursue the marker



since their names could not be included in the text on the marker. A workshop for historical markers will be held April 8, sponsored by Hill Country Trail Association. Jim Cullen remarked that San Pedro took a smaller marker because of the \$. Their funds are limited and Cullen thought that some of us might like to donate to help them finance their marker or even allow them to receive a larger one. Email Cullen for the contact info.

Great turnout for Bill Johnson (the seventh) oral history in Wimberley noted Richard Kidd. Twenty-nine DVDs were sold and many good comments.

Mary Giberson has CDs of George Smith, Sam Harper and Architect Robert Hill (designed the Buda Public Library) to copy and add to our collection.

Giberson introduced Alicia Burrow from City of Buda Department of Tourism, who is interested in developing historical tours. Giberson has developed two tours for her. Giberson suggested Henry Armbruster, history teacher at San Antonio College and author of *The Torreys of Texas*, who were active in the Indian Post Trade, for his oral history.

Chairman Johnson has sent a proposal to the National Trust Conference to visit Hays County, coming through Kyle to see the Katherine Ann Porter House, Claiborne Kyle log house, lunch at the Salt Lick and the Pound House. There will be docents at all stops to give historical details.

Robert Frizzell has located many old maps of Wimberley and Hays County online, but you have to know the exact quadrant you want to print out. We will be able to overlay the old maps over an existing one on our web page to see how county roads have changed over the years. Al McGraw can teach anyone how to do this program in 20 minutes. We'll see.

We are progressing very well on the old county jail reports Chairman Johnson. Bids are out. Hopefully in the next month some will come back and we can get started.

LaMarr Petersen invited us to his retirement social on March 31 from 1:30-3 pm at the Hays courthouse. He had no treasurer's report, but \$520 was raised from DVD sales in Wimberley; other balances stayed the same.

Work was done in Coronado (Goforth), Cocke (Buda), Cheatham (San Marcos), Byrd Owen-Payne (Stringtown), and Badin (Centerpoint), cemeteries with volunteer and hired labor reported Jim Cullen. Lehman HS Nat'l Honor Society tentatively set to return to Coronado on October 11. Application to THC for Historic Texas Cemetery designation at Coronado is a priority for fall.

Dorothy Gumbert contacted Storm Ranch to re-visit three sites documented by Kerbow and Hearn. Cullen has key and permission to visit Middlebrooks Cemetery southwest of Dripping Springs, Reeves Cemetery just north of Driftwood and also with American Cat Con on IH-35 at the site of the old Porter farm...site of an 1870's era tombstone undocumented by Kerbow-Hearn. It is getting crowded on that site; we want to make sure they know

WE know about the grave. Kerbow-Hearn inscription books, Vol. 1 and Vol. II have been reprinted and are for sale on our web site. A high school student has digital images of every stone in the Kyle-Buda area, which will help with further identification. Be careful where you throw your old tombstones cautions Cullen, you just might get them back! A couple in San Marcos had 2 tombstones dumped in their yard years ago and wanted rid of them. They were referred to Johnson who told them to call Cullen. He researched the names and dates and found to which county and family they should be returned, only to find out the families had upgraded the stones from concrete to granite and had set them by the roadside to be hauled off!

Shelley Henry made motion to adjourn. Linda Coker seconded at 7 pm.



Johnson introduced Marvin Williams who recalled how they were driving around one cold Sunday afternoon in January and saw the property for sale. He called for access. As he and his wife wandered around, he saw Good's grave and knew there is just something he liked about the place. Isham Good survived the massacre of Goliad and lived in Lockhart before selling and relocating to Dripping Springs. Good and Johnson hand dug the 50X10 foot well to collect water from nearby, up hill springs. The well has never gone dry and water tests are excellent. Quite the entrepreneurs, they also built a limestone house nearby, in an area close to the Comanche

campground over by Bear Creek, so they could trade with the Indians. That house, the well and evidence of an old wagon trail alongside the pasture are still on the property today. Williams and Osler replaced the old ranch house, but kept a large square-cut limestone for the corner stone of their new house. The original limestone house was used as a creamery when the property was a dairy farm in later years and the barn across the road was the milking barn. In the summer time, water was directed from the well through the creamery to keep dairy products cool. Today the unique building is a fly-tying studio for Marvin Williams.

Richard Kidd introduced Pam Stephenson who cautioned us to be sure to test all your equipment before you set out to take an oral history! You don't need a fancy camera just one you can turn off the flash...and a computer, of course. Be on time! Be prepared with questions and equipment. Never correct them. Oral history is what they perceive. Pflugerville Library has oral history hard copies and DVDs. Wants to set up a web site in Pflugerville with all this information on the Internet. She had handouts explaining the ins and outs of oral history interviewing.

Marvin Williams recalled how Hays County history revolves around ranching and introduced Mike Christal, whose family owned all property from Fitzhugh Road to Onion Creek.

His mother's family owned from Rooster Springs (Polo Club) all the way back to Fitzhugh Road and Belle Terra was the Woody Ranch. He still lives on his grandparent's ranch on Onion Creek. Christal's relatives came to Texas from Missouri. His great, great grandfather traveled to Dripping Springs in an oxcart and found good grass and buffalo. With no shortage of game, they settled here in the 1800's. This property was originally part of the Christal Ranch, but their home place was where Goldenwood is now. Friendship Church was where his father and six brothers went to school. One chapter in True Tales of Central



Texas by Willy Kent (Kemp?) is about the Christals and Mike has one of only two copies in print. His great grandfather was first master of Masonic Lodge in Dripping Springs. Mike is a past master and proud of it. He was also a very entertaining speaker.

Recording Secretary, Linda Keese



