

HAYS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION



Wednesday, October 25, 2017
Leslie McGrath and David Reid
401 Deer Lake Road
Wimberley, Texas 78676

The October 25, 2017, meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission (HCHC) was called to order at 6:16 p.m. by Chairman Kate Johnson. A quorum was met as the following members were present: Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Linda Coker, Luanne Cullen, Robert Frizzell, Mimi Gaitán, Eddie Gumbert, Dorothy Gumbert, Kate Johnson, Jo Landon, SarahAnn Lowther, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Henry Oles, Marian Oles, and Trisha Randow. Four guests also attended.

1. **Announcements**—Kate Johnson thanked the hosts for the evening, Leslie McGrath and David Reid, and gave them a copy of the county history book, *Clear Springs and Limestone Ledges*, and a set of HCHC's DVDs of oral histories and documentaries. She also announced that the December meeting would be held at Judge Shannon's house in Driftwood and the date would be determined later.
2. **Vote on accepting minutes from September 27, 2017**—Ralph Meyer moved to accept the minutes, and Marie Bassett seconded the motion. Motion passed.
3. **Kyle Depot Report**—Trisha Randow reported that the Kyle Depot was open each Sunday from 1:00-5:00 p.m. throughout October. Stephen Reynolds returned to take still photos for his film, *Tumbleweed*. Also Mr. R. C. Parks' grandchildren visited the Depot and left several of Mr. Parks' books and a calendar that actually hung in the Depot when it was open. They reminisced about playing in the Depot as children. Trisha said that Jo Ann Lowe had continued to take care of plants in the Depot's flower beds, had enlisted the help of "The Explorers" at Lehman High School to weed the beds, and had been working with staff at the Wildflower Center for replacement plants. Trisha also said that the construction of the 1914 caboose was progressing. Henry Oles said that the caboose's roof was finished and that the doors had been fabricated and were due to be replaced soon. Corners had been removed and new ones had been created. Wood rot was a concern so they were locating and repairing any soft spots. Jo Landon said that her grandson got married at the Depot earlier in October and that the small wedding was simple and lovely. Many complimentary comments were given. Henry Oles suggested

that a photo album of events held at the Depot be created to remember those events.

4. **Old Hays County Jail Committee Report**—Kate Johnson reported that she had finished writing the RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for the Historical Architect and another for a Historian and Exhibitions Consultant. Kim LaPointe, our Purchasing Director, had included it on the agenda for the Commissioners' Court the previous week and it was passed. It was to be on the Hays County website until November 2 at 3:00 p.m. When it closes, the Old Jail Committee will evaluate the submissions for Historical Architect and for the Historian and Exhibitions Consultant to decide who would be selected. Kate also said that Aaron Jones, supervisor of the Road Department, had contacted Shelley Henry, and the Old Wooden Jail would be moved in November to the Old Hays County Jail site on Fredericksburg Street in San Marcos. The road department will put down gravel, level it, and place the Old Wooden Jail on it.
5. **Horticulture Committee Report**—Delbert Bassett reported that the Texas Barberry, *Mahonia swaseyi*, is a 'shrub of concern' in Hays County and resides in only a few Texas counties along the Balcones Escarpment. There are a few small populations in Hays County. One population is in our northern most corner where the Pedernales nips across our county. This population moves due south for a mile or so. The other grouping is along the Devil's Backbone canyon bottoms. Delbert believes there are other small populations scattered between these two. Agarito is one of the first plants to bloom in the spring with its small but very fragrant yellow flower. When pollinated, a bright red, pea-sized berry is formed and makes great jelly if you can get it before the birds and deer. The Barberry differs from Agarito in a couple of ways. Most noticeable is the Barberry leaf is wider and not as thick or leathery but most importantly the leaves are in groups of nine to seven. Agarito, as its scientific name, *Mahonia trifoliolata*, denotes, has three leaves and occasionally five. Botanists are thinking that the shrub with five leaves is a hybrid between Agarito and Barberry. If anyone spots any of the Barberry shrubs, please note the location and send Delbert an email so he can follow up and confirm its location. Delbert said that he will pass this information along to the LBJ Wildflower Center, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. They maintain files on concerned, endangered, and rare plant species.
6. **Cemetery Committee Report**—Jo Landon reported that the marker application had been submitted for the Cocke Cemetery. The County Commissioner's office had been contacted in reference to barriers to protect the Antioch Cemetery and help with maintaining the 1.7-acre unfenced portion. Jo received a call from Betty Castro about the overgrown grass at the San Pedro Cemetery. Jerry Borcharding, Hays County Director of Transportation, stated that all county maintained cemeteries would be mowed by the end of October. Richard Gomez cleaned the Byrd Owen Payne Cemetery on October 2.
7. **Hispanic History Committee Report**—Luanne Cullen reported for Mimi Gaitán who had not heard back from the Cuauhtémoc Hall people about the marker application at meeting time. Mimi also hoped to visit the Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos soon. Ofelia Vásquez-Philo loved the fall arrangement and signed

card that Luanne brought to her from the HCHC members. At last phone visit, Ofelia would be at the Warm Springs Rehab Center in Kyle until the end of October and then would be moved to the Legends Rehab in New Braunfels.

8. **Historical Marker Committee Report**—Marie Bassett reported that, because the THC annual meeting had been cancelled, there would not be a quorum of THC committee members until the quarterly meeting on December 8th. That meant we would have to wait until then to hear if the Antioch Cemetery had been accepted as an underfunded marker. She still had not received the synopses for our 2017 markers. Regarding the question posed at the last meeting as to how many historical markers there are presently in Hays County, the answer is 141. They can be viewed on the THC website. Work is ongoing on the W.T. Chapman marker, so it should be ready for submitting before the November 15 deadline. Applications already submitted for the whole of Texas so far can be viewed on the THC website. We have two — Cheatham-Hohenberg and Cocke (just a medallion) cemeteries. Henry Oles is interested in further recognition for his Old Mill in San Marcos which is already on the National Register of Historic Places (which is a National Parks program administered in Texas by the THC). Marie directed him to Judy George-Garza, THC's Federal Programs Specialist.

9. **Courthouse Committee Report**—Linda Coker reported that Leadership San Marcos met in the community meeting room and focused on "Heritage and History." They toured the Courthouse, the Calaboose Museum, and the Old Jail. Plans for the Courthouse Christmas lights and decorations had begun. Community Services workers may be able to help in placing the lights and decorations. The lights in the museum have been changed from soft light to a cool, bright light which are too bright for the items there. She would be requesting the new lights to be replaced by softer lights. On October 25, a large group came in for a tour as a stop off on their trip from Florida to California.

Adjourn—Eddie Gumbert moved that meeting adjourn; Ralph Meyer seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Because the meeting location had been built by Leon Jaworski, Kate gave some background about him as an American attorney and law professor who served as the second special prosecutor during the Watergate Scandal, was the youngest person ever admitted to the Texas bar in 1925, and was the defense attorney for some highly visible politicians, such as Lyndon Johnson and Nixon staffer, Bud Krogh. Kate then introduced David Reid, current owner of the house, who spoke about Leon Jaworski, the house, and the development of Deer Lake Estates. Supper followed.

Respectfully submitted,
Luanne P. Cullen, HCHC Secretary
(photos courtesy of Luanne Cullen)

