

HAYS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION



February 28, 2019
Madelyn Uresti
Ruby Ranch Lodge
292 Bartlett Drive, W.
Buda, Texas 78610

The February 28, 2019, meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission (HCHC) was called to order at 6:27 p.m. A quorum was met as the following members were present: Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Gary Bryson, Eric Casillas, Linda Coker, Luanne Cullen, Robert Frizzell, Irma Gaitán, Dorothy Gumbert, Eddie Gumbert, Faye Haskins, Kate Johnson, Richard Kidd, Quincy Kennedy, Jo Landon, Jo Ann Lowe, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Jerry T. Moore, July Moreno, Henry Oles, Marian Oles, Trisha Randow, Gina Rogers, and Griffin Spell. Four guests also attended.

Introduction of Host and New Members—Kate thanked Madelyn Uresti, owner of the Ruby Ranch Lodge, for hosting our meeting and presented her with the eight documentaries of Hays County history, our main history book of Hays County, *Clear Springs and Limestone Ledges*, plus two mugs, postcards, refrigerator magnet, and notecards from the Kyle Railroad Depot and Heritage Center.

Kate introduced the new members to HCHC, presented them with their name badges, and allowed them time to describe their interests in history. Those members were Gary Bryson, Eric Casillas, Faye Haskins, Quincy Kennedy, July Moreno, and Griffin Spell. Cindy Daugherty and Daphne Tenorio will receive their name badges at the next meeting. Welcome again to all new members!

Vote on accepting minutes from December 15, 2018—Marie Bassett said that the name “Deacon Eduardo Rositas from Dripping Springs” should be changed to “Deacon Edward Rositas from Dripping Springs.” Cindy Meyer moved to accept the minutes as corrected; Delbert Bassett seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report—Cindy Meyer read the Treasurer's Report. The General Fund has \$15,395.29; the Publication Fund has \$147,381.36; and the Jail Restoration Fund has \$660,000.00.

Committee Reports

1. Historic Kyle RR Depot & Heritage Center—Trisha Randow reported that the Kyle Chamber of Commerce has now listed the Depot on its website. She also discussed the signage for the Depot and its ongoing difficulties. The City of Kyle did not approve a variance for the placement of a sign under the existing ordinance. A berm sign was considered but the material for the sign could not be set directly on the ground. Also TxDot is widening Center Street to accommodate a turn lane which will reduce the area for a sign and a future historical marker. The City approved items to complete the caboose such as lighting and decking as long as the contractors provide drawings for the permitting process.

Jerry Hendrix, with the City of Kyle, asked if the Depot would host programming with the Library, such as genealogy classes and historical movie nights. The first free movie was scheduled for March 16, 2019, at 2:00 p.m. in the Depot. *Murder on the Orient Express* would be shown and lemonade and popcorn would be provided. Other events at the Depot included “Certipied” on National Pie Day, January 23, when pizza and pies were served. Another event, “Pi Social,” was scheduled for March 14 at the Depot from 5:00-8:00 p.m. Tours continue to be scheduled including a group of homeschooled students with parents. The caboose needs to have work on electrical, lighting, HVAC, landscaping, and decks that the County Purchasing and Facilities will handle. Henry Oles reported that Harold Schroeder will place bids to pull the caboose closer to the platform and complete the finishing details.

2. Old Hays County Jail—Kate said that the committee had met in the Old Jail and discussed the proposed Plan of Work for the next year and a half and planned to meet periodically with the architects and review their plans and progress. The committee will conduct research on the history of the Old Jail and will plan for a fundraiser to support it. Maintenance concerns focused on the fire ants, door lock, and a longer chain for fence gate. The committee will meet again at the Old Jail on March 8 at 10:00 a.m.
3. Cemeteries—Jo Landon reported that research for Historic Cemetery Designations for Driftwood, Byrd Owen-Payne, and Pleasant Valley cemeteries have been planned for the year. She had begun the application for Driftwood Cemetery, but needed to get permission and access from the landowners for the other two. She also mentioned searching for a single stone in an area southeast of San Marcos that marks the grave of a three-year-old girl with the German inscription. Jo said that the ongoing attempt to get permission to visit the Cheatham-Hohenberg Cemetery continues. Its Historical Subject Marker was installed next to the McGehee marker on SH 80. Jo was contacted by Minnie Harper Nelson with a request to determine if a grant could be found to restore gravestones in the Antioch Cemetery. The next meeting of the Cemetery Committee would be held on Saturday, March 2, 2:00 at the Railroad Depot.
4. Historical Markers—Marie Bassett reported that all three applications accepted for review by THC last December would proceed to inscriptions—

19HY01 Riverhead Farm, 19HY02 Kyle Depot, and 19HY03 La Sociedad Mutualista de Cuauhtémoc. The window for 2020 applications runs from September 1 through November 15, with application forms online at the website thc.texas.gov during August. The applications should be submitted to her as marker chair as early as possible, preferably by October 31. On March 1, the application forms would be online for the Undertold Marker program for submission between May 1 and June 15, 2019. Gina Rogers had decided to submit her application for the Alba Ranch as an Undertold Marker. News of the Undertold Marker application for Jacob's Well should be available soon. Charlie and Sherry Haydon would be holding an unveiling for the W. T. Chapman marker at the Homestead at Dripping Springs (Marshall-Chapman House), 500 Mercer Street, at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 10. All HCHC members were invited to attend the dedication and tour of the home. Marie asked members to let her know if they would attend so she could give those numbers to the Haydons.

5. Horticulture—Delbert Bassett said that the committee planned to measure the big Buckthorn at Camp Young Judaea, in Woodcreek (north of Wimberley). They would visit Eric Becker's native plant collection, visit Zimmerman Ranch and conduct a plant survey. They will also measure the Hays County Historical Trees for a tree-health data base. The trees include the Kyle Hanging Tree, the Kyle Auction Oak; the Sam Houston Kissing Tree, the Log Cabin Oaks, the General Burleson Cabin Oak in San Marcos; Dr. Pound's Oak in Dripping Springs; the Governor Hogg Memorial Pecan, the Sam Houston Pecan, and the Sam Houston Oak on the county courthouse courtyard. They will investigate the *Mahonia swaseyi* site along Creek Road near Middlebrook Cemetery and also the site near the Devil's Backbone area. They will also measure *Quercus fusiformis* off Fitzhugh Road on the Hurlbut property.
6. Tejano History—Irma Gaitán reported that the committee attended sessions at the annual Friends of the Texas Historical Commission (FTHC) conference, "Real Places, Real People" in Austin, Texas, from January 16-18. Some activities during February included attending the swearing-in ceremony of County Judge Ruben Bercerra and new County Commissioners; meeting with muralist Jaime Sheldon to provide input as to a proposal for a mural on the Conoco Building to portray El Barrio del Pescado which references the State Fish Hatchery; meeting with members of the Tejano History Committee on February 23. The meeting included plans to finish the Cuauhtémoc Hall and Alba Family projects; to identify countywide cities and families along the Camino Real; to consider areas for mural art; to follow up on the Alfonso Rodriguez (first Mexican-American police officer in San Marcos) resolution that had been postponed from the San Marcos City Council agenda due to the fatal shooting of San Marcos Policeman Gallagher; and to plan for future meetings.
7. Courthouse—Linda Coker said that the committee had met in the courthouse meeting room on February 23 to discuss goals for the year. The primary goal is to inventory and organize the materials in the office storage room. A day

- will be set aside for committee members to meet and begin the project. She said that March is always a busy month for fifth-grade school groups touring the courthouse. She invited all HCHC members to attend the March 2 event at the courthouse when County Judge Ruben Becerra would read proclamations for Texas Independence Day, for the recognition of Hays County's 171st birthday, and for the Mardi Gras parade and celebration.
8. Oral History—Luanne Cullen said that the Oral History Committee met on February 23 at the county courthouse meeting room to make plans for the upcoming year. The members examined the notebook of previous interviews with transcripts and essays about the people interviewed and reviewed the information about oral histories from THC. The committee plans to complete the notebook by gathering all tapes, transcripts, essays, etc. In order to share equipment more easily, they planned to research video and audio equipment that would be more easily handled. The plan is to interview those people who are older (such as 100-year-olds), to represent all towns in Hays County, and to continue to represent all ethnic groups.
 9. Certified Local Government (CLG) –Kate Johnson said that the HCHC has participated in the CLG program of the Texas Historical Commission (THC) since 1990. This program “certifies” our county’s historic preservation program through the THC and allows the HCHC to participate more actively in certain preservation activities with the THC. Some of the CLG’s responsibilities include reviewing any National Register nominations submitted in Hays County and submitting comments to the THC; reviewing and making formal comments on any projects involving federal funds or federal permits; and making comments on federally funded projects under Section 106 Review. The CLG program allows us to participate in their grant program which we have used to receive grants for National Register nominations and surveys. Hays County is one of the few counties participating in the CLG program as most are cities in Texas.

Announcements: Kate said that the next HCHC meeting would be at Barbara LaBorde’s house west of Kyle. She has a sinkhole in her pasture that we will be able to visit.

Adjournment: Delbert Bassett moved that the meeting adjourn; Cindy Meyer seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Program: Kate introduced Beth Smith, Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2. Judge Smith spoke about the history of Mountain City including the natural areas of Barber Falls and Barton Hill. She related how the Barber and Barton families moved to the area and were joined when Rachel Barton, daughter of James U. Barton, married Henry Barber who owned a store in Mountain City and later became sheriff of Hays County. She also related the life of W. W. Haupt, who is credited with naming Mountain City and served as postmaster for a number of years. Many thanks to Judge Smith for sharing her stories about Mountain City!

Respectfully submitted,
Luanne P. Cullen, HCHC Secretary
(Photos courtesy of Luanne Cullen and Eric Beckers)

