

HAYS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION



April 25, 2019

Jacob's Well Natural Area
1699 Mt. Sharp Road
Wimberley, Texas 78676

Agenda:

The April 25, 2019, meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission (HCHC) was called to order by Chairman Kate Johnson at 6:21 p.m. A quorum was met as the following members were in attendance: Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Gary Bryson, Eric Casillas, Linda Coker, Luanne Cullen, Cindy Daugherty, Robert Frizzell, Irma Gaitán, Dorothy Gumbert, Eddie Gumbert, Faye Haskins, Kate Johnson, Quincy Kennedy, Richard Kidd, Jo Landon, Jo Ann Lowe, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Jerry T. Moore, Henry Oles, Marian Oles, Trisha Randow, and Gina Rogers. One guest also attended.

Vote on accepting minutes from March 28, 2019—Dorothy Gumbert moved to accept the minutes; Ralph Meyer seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Program: HCHC member, Quincy Kennedy, discussed the history and current activities at the Jacob's Well Natural Area and led members to the site of Jacob's Well for more background information, views of the trail and spring, and questions/answers.

Committee Reports

1. **Historic Kyle RR Depot & Heritage Center**—Trisha Randow said that Easter at the Depot was well attended and thanked volunteers for their assistance, especially Willie Tenorio for his role as the Easter Bunny. Bids had gone out for a sign. Trisha and Jo Ann Lowe attended the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center's plant sale for replacement plants. Plans for a group walk/run, *For the Love of Go*, was considered for this summer on the first Saturdays of June, July, and August. This free event would encourage people to run or walk from the Depot to the Kyle Library and back and learn about healthy eating and drinking habits. The caboose is continuing to make progress. Bids have been received for final projects, the caboose is in its final resting place, and antique fixtures might be purchased.
2. **Old Hays County Jail**—Kate Johnson said that the committee had met on Monday, April 1 at the County Courthouse. Architect Tracy Hutson discussed the two possible bathroom locations and the additional parking area on the county's property with the understanding that we would use the Calaboose's parking area for when the Old Jail

is open for group visits. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with San Marcos would be needed. The architects also talked about removing the carport because it is not relevant to our period of significance. Some of the windows need to be restored and the bars will be hinged for easier cleaning and repairs. Erin McClelland, exhibit specialist, also spoke about her vision of the jail. The price tag is \$425,000 for three rooms.

3. **Cemeteries**—Jo Landon met with Erin Abel to address issues with trespassing on her property (location of the Abel Ranch Cemetery). Jo will install “No Trespassing” signs and tape off the drive. Linda Coker said that the manager of Kissing Tree development wants to know of any concerns from the Abel Ranch residents. Jo and Dorothy Gumbert had cleaned some headstones at the San Marcos Cemetery with Orvus, an approved cleaning agent. Jo had also purchased a chain and combination lock to replace the old chain and locks on the gate to Pleasant Valley Cemetery. Charlie Haydon and his cousin will discuss whether or not to pursue a marker when they meet with family members at a reunion in June. A committee meeting was planned for May 18 to visit some cemeteries and check on their condition.
4. **Historical Markers**—Marie Bassett reminded members that the Undertold Stories Marker window was open until June 15. She had spoken with Cale Baese (member of the Claiborne Kyle Log House Commission) about contacts for a possible date for the dedication of the marker at the Kyle Family Pioneer Cemetery. She had represented Kate on April 2 by giving a presentation on the HCHC to the San Marcos/Hays County Genealogical Society and on April 4 by updating the San Marcos Historic Preservation Commission on the marker process for La Sociedad Mutualista de Cuauhtémoc. On April 3, Marie, Kate, Dorothy, and Eddie Gumbert visited the Oldham House north of Wimberley for consideration of a Recorded Texas Historical Landmark application. On April 22, Marie and Jo Landon met with the Camp Ben McCulloch United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) to discuss a cemetery marker for Wallace Mountain Cemetery in Dripping Springs. The UDC members later voted to apply for a Texas Historic Cemetery medallion and plaque and would work on a cemetery marker in the fall.

The Phillips Cemetery had received a historical marker before the Historic Texas Cemetery program began in 1997, so it is not recorded at the courthouse. Jo Landon will help in getting the cemetery recorded. The First Baptist Church of Dripping Springs was rebuilt after a disastrous fire in 2007, so a supplemental plaque is needed to update the existing marker. Sherry Haydon intends to apply for that. The Jacob’s Well undertold marker inscription was being proofread by THC and would be sent for review soon. Everything was delayed because THC was dealing with the aftermath of the destructive tornado at the Caddo Mounds State Historic Site.

5. **Horticulture**—Delbert Bassett said that April had been an active month. First, the committee visited the site of the Middlebrook Cemetery off Creek Road. A few days later, he and Eric Beckers joined Minnette Marr (Wildflower Center botanist) at the Doell-Roble Ranch to look for *Mahonia Swasyei* (Texas barberry), and *Mahonia Trifoliolata* (agarito) and found a hybrid of the two. Minnette shared a way to identify which of the three possible forms was being observed. Eric located other woody species that are seldom seen in Hays County, including the *Prunus serotina* var. *eximia* (escarpment black cherry).

The committee also visited the Halifax Ranch and was led on a plant tour with Bill Johnson and botanist, Bill Carr. Some of the plants identified were a *Philadelphus texensis* (Texas mock orange) growing out of limestone rock; *Euphorbia roemeriana* (Roemer's spurge) and *Streptanthus bracteatus*, bracted (twistflower), which is on the verge of being placed on the Endangered Species List.

The committee also met at Eric Becker's home at Beacon Hill west of Buda for an educational tour of the many plants he has gathered and planted on his five acres. Delbert said that in May, the committee will visit the Zimmerman's Lazy Z Ranch and Camp Young Judaea and will hopefully measure the health of the Hays County historical trees.

6. **Tejano History**—Irma Gaitán said that there was no committee meeting during the last month due to Spring Break and Easter. The Alba Ranch marker application and narrative continue to move forward as do their other projects.
7. **Courthouse**—Linda Coker said that her computer at the courthouse had died so many photographs and documents had been lost. She reminded members that May would be Preservation Month and that the luncheon on May 7 at the Price Center would honor Kate Johnson as the Preservation Advocate of the Year. The speaker would discuss the THC's tax incentive programs.
8. **Oral History**—Luanne Cullen said that the committee met on April 13 to continue discussing the purchase of a new camera and software with editing capabilities. Cindy Daugherty offered to meet with Arro Smith, technical services manager at the San Marcos Public Library, and discuss their Historical Collection and possibilities of housing the HCHC's oral histories in the future. He invited the committee to meet at the library and tour the historical collection. Jo Ann Lowe, Gina Rogers, and Luanne planned to attend the Texas Oral History Association (TOHA) conference in Austin on April 26-27 to gain more information about setting up an oral history project from planning stage to the final presentation and storage. Luanne thanked Marie Bassett for continuing to send photos and stories of previous interviews and research, such as Travis Garnett, Peggy Oldham Savage, and Thomas Dodsworth, in order to address one of the goals of completing past projects.
9. **Certified Local Government (CLG)**—no report was given for the month.

10. **Buck Winn Murals**—Kate said that the murals had arrived at the Government Center in San Marcos. John Hartmann would arrive on Sunday with his staff to begin the process of preparing the walls for the installation of the murals by May 3. A special reception was planned for June 1 to celebrate the event.

Announcements—Kate said that Cindy Coers, chairman of the Comal County Historical Commission, wanted us to know that they will be having a speaker, Lynn Young, who would be giving a presentation on El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. Lynn is on the board of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association. The meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, June 18.

The next HCHC meeting would be held on Thursday, May 23, in San Marcos at Thea Dake's house on Belvin Street.

Adjournment—Delbert Bassett moved that the meeting adjourn; Dorothy Gumbert seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Luanne P. Cullen, HCHC Secretary

(Photos courtesy of Luanne Cullen and Eric Beckers)

