

## HAYS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION



**Wednesday, December 9, 2015**  
**Crystal River Inn**  
**326 West Hopkins Street**  
**San Marcos, Texas 78666**

The December 9, 2015, meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission was called to order by Chairman Kate Johnson at 6:31 p.m. A quorum was met as the following HCHC members were present: Diana Baker, Delbert Bassett, Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Sue Cohen, Linda Coker, Jim Cullen, Luanne Cullen, Cathy Dillon, Robert Frizzell, Irma Gaitan, Eddie Gumbert, Dorothy Gumbert, Carmen Imel, Melody Jaramio, Kate Johnson, Richard Kidd, Trisha Randow, Ralph Randow, Ofelia Vásquez-Philo, and Charlie Willis. Three guests also attended.

1. **Announcements**—Kate said that Cathy Dillon would be providing information about the Crystal River Inn and would give a tour of the home after the meeting.
2. **Vote on accepting minutes from September 24, 2015**—Dorothy Gumbert moved to accept the minutes, and Ralph Randow seconded the motion. Motion passed.
3. **Kyle Depot Report**—Kate said that the City of Kyle would like for the HCHC to take over the Kyle Depot and run it for the city which would include a user agreement between the City of Kyle and Hays County. Richard Kidd had been overseeing the installation of the audio-visual equipment and the electricity lines. Linda Coker had been instrumental in getting furniture and other items for the trainmaster's office. Linda said that a potbelly stove was needed, and Charlie Willis asked her to see him about a potential stove. Kate was hoping that the opening for the depot would be in mid January and that a gift shop would be set up to sell items such as note cards, railroad magnets displaying the depot as well as the historic water tower, etc. She had several examples of items from other museums for members to see. Delbert suggested that a competition could be held to allow people to design logos for Kyle.

4. **Kyle History Book Report**—Kate said that the book release of the Kyle History that Betty Harrison wrote with the HCHC would be held in January and might coincide with the depot opening. January 23 had been suggested as a possible day for these events. Volunteers would be needed to help at the depot.
5. **Flowers, Shrubs, & Trees Report**—Delbert Bassett reported that an arborist, Jordy Hagen, of Tree Wise Men, and an engineer from a firm contracted by Kate Johnson, visited Kyle’s Auction Oak in November to develop a plan to stabilize the tree. The engineering report had not yet been received. The tree does show evidence that it is beginning to heal itself as evidenced by new tissue developing in the split. He also updated members about the gardening support from the Hays County Master Gardeners and the Kyle Garden Club who will take charge of the landscaping and gardening duties at the depot. Valerie Marburger of Kyle will be the project manager and, with her team of eight volunteer gardeners, had removed weeds and Bermuda grass and mixed compost (donated by Texas Disposal System) into the soil. They would use native plants and antique roses which would follow the flora theme of plants common during the late 1800s. The City of Kyle would be installing a water system for the gardens. Delbert also described his trip to London in October where he visited with Tony Kirkham, Head of the Arboretum and Horticultural Services at the Royal Botanical Garden, Kew. Mr. Kirkham will be assisting Delbert in getting copies of all the specimen documents they have from the early Texas botanists. These documents are in the herbarium and historical records department.
6. **Cemetery Committee Report**—Charlie Willis reported that visits to the Cheatham Cemetery and Cementerio del Rio showed them to be in bad shape and will need work. Marie Bassett said that the Kyle Family Pioneer Cemetery had received the historical marker designation. Ray Whisenant had donated \$850 toward the marker and that Marie had written the description.
7. **Oral History Committee Report**—Sue Cohen said that the Downtown San Marcos project was progressing with interviews and photos.
  - a. **Memorial Day Flood Documentary**—Diana Baker said that the documentary was being addressed as many people had been interviewed who had experienced the flooding and the memorial event in October.
8. **Hispanic Committee Report**—Ofelia Vásquez-Philo reported that the Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos was going great with the current art exhibit, “Music of the Gente: Celebrating 34 Years of the Tejano Conjunto Festival;” after-school tutoring program; Youth Ballet Folklórico, and other special classes. She was especially pleased that the Little Engineers program was being enhanced by Dr. Araceli Ortiz and her connection with NASA and that computers and classes would be provided by Texas State University. The San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District is also partnering with them to provide students in grades 3, 4, and 5.
9. **Historical Marker Committee Report**—Marie Bassett said that the window for submitting applications had closed. Our three applications have passed the first hurdle and will be considered by THC. They are the Wimberley-Hughes House and the Miss Lillie Dobie House, both in Wimberley, and the Kyle Family Pioneer Cemetery. Linda Coker also mentioned that Ray Whisenant had

contributed \$850 toward the historical marker at the Kyle Family Pioneer Cemetery.

10. **Courthouse Committee Report**—Linda Coker reported on the tour of the Old Jail to the San Marcos Young Professionals group; the Wine Walk that went well with all 400 tickets sold; tours of the courthouse by groups such as a family group for homecoming and boy scout troop; the award from Main Street for Downtown Partner of the Year; the Christmas decorations that included new lights; and her receiving the honor of Ambassador of the Year.
11. **Old Jail Report**—Kate Johnson said that our account has \$350,000 for the Old County Jail and that \$150,000 would be donated by the Burdine Johnson Foundation. She hoped that bids would go out in the summer. Discussion followed about possible uses for the Old County Jail before interior renovation could begin. One suggestion was that it become “The Museum of Violent Crime.” In January, the movable jail would be moved from the San Marcos Baptist Academy, and she hoped that \$50,000 could be raised for the restoration of that rare wooden jail.
12. **Adjourn**—Delbert Bassett moved that the meeting adjourn, and Marie Bassett seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m. Following the meeting, Cathy Dillon, owner of the Crystal River Inn, described the history of the house, displayed old photos, and offered a tour of the rooms. Supper was served after the tour.

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

