

HAYS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
DR. POUND PIONEER FARMSTEAD
THURSDAY, MAY 22, 2008

The house Dr. Pound built in 1854 for his family is a treat for HCHC members to tour before the meeting, unusual because the furnishings are those that his family used for 150 years until they bequeathed all to the city of Dripping Springs to be used as a teaching museum. It was easy to see how the family members really lived in the home. Two log rooms were constructed originally of cedar (ashe juniper) trees, which was available on site, separated by a dogtrot and faced due south to catch all the cooling breezes. It is the oldest existing structure in Dripping Springs. In 1870 one log room was expanded to make a parlor and a bedroom. Throughout the years various rooms constructed of limestone rocks were added to the home, but there never was indoor plumbing, electricity. A small, very small, lean-to kitchen was made off the dining room, which was more of a butler's pantry than anything else. The original kitchen was one of the out buildings as was the barn, shed, smokehouse, outhouse and slave quarters.

Most unusual is the cistern that is accessible from both inside and outside the home in the dining room. The hand-dug, limestone rock, well/cistern must have been constructed close to the home originally and in expanding the house to accommodate a dining room and small kitchen, the outside wall simply incorporated half of the cistern so that Sarah Pound or whoever was drawing water merely lifted a window to lower the bucket and did not have to step outside. The 22-foot diameter cistern holds 1600-1800 gallons and the water filtered with charcoal by Dr. Pound. Another unique feature was the stretched canvas ceiling throughout the home. All the rooms had stretched, off-white canvas ceilings with the exception of one small room off the original log room, which was open to the rafters. This room also had a Dutch-style door to the outside, directly across the jut-out for the small kitchen, making room for a small limestone patio, protected by the house on three sides. Could that have been used as an out-door shower?

And last, but not least, intriguing to all is Dr. Pound's cold frame, a bottomless box sitting on the ground, with its sides extending beneath the soil frost line with a transparent top, in this case made of glass. The sash (top) is constructed on a slope downwards from back to front and hinged at the back so it can be opened for ventilation. Early doctors relied on homeopathic herbal remedies and many grew their own herbs. Dr. Pound could have used his rather large cold frame to protect tender medicinal herbs as well as get a jump on the spring vegetable season.

After the tour sixteen HCHC members and guests sat outside around blue-checked, cloth covered tables accented with herbal and wildflower centerpieces with five Pound House board members; Jim Polkinghern, Claireen Fellers, Dennis Cannon, Mike Davidson and Executive Director Marianne Simmons under the spreading, graceful limbs of an aging oak tree said to be as old or older than Treaty Oak, in the cool of the evening.

It was time for our meeting, which was called to order by Chairman Kate Johnson at 7:05 pm. Chairman Johnson reminded all members if they change their address or phone number, they need to inform both the secretary and HCHC chairman. A new list will go out containing all phone number and addresses. Please take time to review your numbers and email or call Linda or Kate with corrections. New phone numbers to make note of: Linda Coker: 512-618-2317; Bonnie Eissler: 512-858-7843 home; 512-608-1963 cell; Luanne Cullen 512-461-9912 cell.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation auction, celebrating preservation month, May, is on HYPERLINK "<http://www.preservationauction.cmarket.com>"
www.preservationauction.cmarket.com. There are some really special auction items. Check it out.

Bob Flocke moved to accept minutes from April 24, 2008. LaMarr Petersen seconded. Motion passed.

LaMarr Petersen reported the Hays County Historical Commission fund balance as \$17,957.98, Hays County Historical Commission budget balance \$7,453.91, Cemetery fund balance \$7,991.55 and Old County Jail fund totaled \$8,493.11 on May 22, 2008.

El Camino Real Elementary school has received the first coat of stain on the foyer floor for the design.

Lila Knight has resigned as chairman of the Historical Marker committee. Betty Harrison has agreed to take on the responsibility.

Bonnie Eissler reported the Oral History committee has completed two interviews and have three more lined up to take before they stop to edit all the material they have. Committee members need a large, centrally located place to store and preserve all of these documents and CDs. HCHC members need to check with their local libraries for storage and display room.

The Publicity committee was quiet this month.

Jim Cullen couldn't be in two places at once so he sent his lovely wife Luanne, who reported summer maintenance, is in full swing at both Coronado (at Goforth) and Cocke (at Buda) Cemeteries. Lehman High School National Honor Society members have tentatively set a final school year visit to Coronado this Saturday. San Marcos researcher Ollie Giles has agreed to help with the historical deed work on Coronado and new materials on the site have been secured from the Texas General Land Office. An application for 'Historic Texas Cemetery' is anticipated for submission to the THC. Byrd Owen-Payne Cemetery (old Stringtown, south of San Marcos) was cleaned and plans are being made for the same at Cheatham Cemetery southeast of San Marcos. Requests are being made for a return to and clean up of Bading Cemetery (old Centerpoint community), with hopes of permission to permanently fence the small isolated site. The Cemetery committee is anticipating a visit to Cruze Cemetery between Wimberley and Kyle this Sunday if landowner permission is secured.

Chairman Johnson said the HCHC website looks good and LaMarr Petersen reported book sales by credit cards would be processed through the website by Tuesday.

Chairman Johnson has gone through one travel agent and is now on another for the California Trip, which will be by train from Texas to the Warner Ranch and then by car to LA; then by train to Oakland where we will overnight stay in the Western St. Francis. A ceremony is being planned using both Texas and California flags, various dignitaries and a color guard. We'll have a day to sightsee and then fly home. Sounds like a great time, not to be missed, still taking place during the month of November and lasting at least a week. It's a lot of coordinating and various modes of transportation. Let's see how long this travel agent will last.

The Old County Jail is on the agenda this Tuesday for Hays County Commissioners Court. The deed and preservation easement will be signed and then bids can be accepted.

Mary Giberson announced she had contacted a bus company about a day of visiting historic places in Buda, Driftwood, Dripping Springs, Wimberley, Kyle, San Marcos, Umland and Neiderwald. Circle Historic Hays County tours should run in the spring when wild flowers are in full bloom and a person from each community familiar with the research data and locale should speak to passengers while the bus is traveling in their vicinity. She plans for a quick bite in Buda before boarding, a stop mid-point in San Marcos for High Tea and wine and cheese at Jardines on the return trip. It is a good way to familiarize the public with HCHC and educate newcomers about the history of Hays County. She enlisted the help of several members at the meeting help and needs more. She is more than capable, but she can't do it all by herself!

Chairman Johnson announced there is NO MEETING in JUNE. Sharon Michaelis is remodeling her house and no one, but no one is getting in! Meetings are scheduled for July, August, September and October with the last one in November as our trip to California. With that she adjourned the meeting at 8:35 pm. and invited Pound House board members and HCHC members to the buffet table laden with delectable, tasty treats.

After dinner and talk under the century year old oak, which has probably seen many eat and talk under its arched limbs, one Pound House member said "You (HCHC members) are fun to party with. You can come visit anytime." The light was fading fast as it was after 9 pm. So we packed up the tables and chairs; snatched the last of the yummy brownie bites and sand tarts and made our way home.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Keese
Recording Secretary