

## HAYS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION



**Wednesday, September 27, 2017**  
**Old Fish Hatchery**  
**206 North C.M. Allen Pkwy**  
**San Marcos, Texas 78666**

The September 27, 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: Marie Bassett, Eric Beckers, Linda Coker, Luanne Cullen, Robert Frizzell, Irma (Mimi) Gaitán, Eddie Gumbert, Dorothy Gumbert, Kate Johnson, Richard Kidd, Jo Landon, Jo Ann Lowe, SarahAnn Lowther, Cindy Meyer, Ralph Meyer, Jerry T. Moore, Henry Oles, and Marian Oles. Three guests also attended.

**Announcements**—Kate Johnson announced that the next HCHC meeting would be held in Brownsville, Texas, in conjunction with the Texas Historical Commission's Regional meeting. The tentative dates are from October 25 to October 27, 2017, with the HCHC meeting at a restaurant and the Cameron County Historical Commission joining us. More information would be sent in the following weeks.

1. **Vote on accepting minutes from June 22, 2017**—Jerry T. Moore moved to accept the minutes; Mimi Gaitán seconded the motion. Motion passed.
2. **Historic Kyle RR Depot**—Jo Landon reported for Trisha Randow that the Depot had a good summer. In July, Stephen Reynolds used the Depot as a location for his film, *Tumbleweed*, which provides commentary on a way of life in a small Texas town and uses visuals of older structures, tradition, and dust to add to the film. He will return in October to take more pictures. Since losing the Hays County Master Gardener volunteer, Delbert and Marie Bassett assisted Trisha Randow in weeding and watering the Depot's flower beds, and Jo Ann Lowe volunteered to take care of the beds despite the summer heat and nut grass problem. Jo Ann said that she was still working on securing volunteers from the Kyle Garden Club to maintain the roses or she would contact the Hays Master Gardeners about helping. Students from The Explorers at Lehman High School were planning to weed the beds as a community service project. She was also

- hoping to acquire some replacement plants from the horticulturist at the Wildflower Center. Bids went out for the renovation of the caboose for a second time, and the contract was issued to Harold Schroeder. Harold began by sandblasting nearly 100 years of rust from the undercarriage of the caboose and painted all the metal black. He is currently completing work on the steps and would repair the roof and coat it with a special material often used to line truck beds. Then the plywood doors would be replaced with actual operating doors. The interior had been cleared of non-relevant items and the interior restoration would begin soon. Henry Oles added that Harold is a dedicated railroad man and will bring the caboose back to its original appearance. The caboose will back up to the Depot, will sit on tracks, and will be wheelchair accessible. Kate thanked Henry and Marion Oles for their help in getting the caboose restoration started with their association with Harold Schroeder and their knowledge of trains.
3. **Old Hays County Jail Report**—Kate Johnson reported that the Jail Committee had a meeting at the Old Jail the previous week. They noticed that a crack in one room seemed larger but hopefully funds would be available to restore the interior. Kate had completed the RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for the Historical Architect and another RFQ for a Historian and Exhibitions Consultant. Kim LaPointe, our Purchasing Director, would be working on those as well as others for various departments. She had also talked with Clint Garza, Hays County Development Services Director, and asked if someone could return the Old Wooden Jail from the San Marcos Baptist Academy to the Old Jail Site. He was looking to find out in court records who actually moved the Old Wooden Jail from the Old Jail site to the San Marcos Baptist Academy several years ago.
  4. **History of Ranching Documentary**—Richard Kidd said that a photo shoot was planned for the first week in November in Philadelphia which would provide the final piece of footage needed for the documentary. He described the “History of Ranching” mural as being a 360-degree mural created around 1936. It was installed in a circular display at the Pearl Brewery in San Marcos, then cut apart many years later. The pieces were salvaged, and many pieces have been restored and displayed in various locations. The HCHC has purchased two sections and are having them restored in Philadelphia. When completed, the two sections will be on display in the Hays County Government Center.
  5. **Cemetery Committee Report**—Jo Landon reported that the fence at the Antioch Cemetery was repaired after the insurance check was received, but the fence was hit again three weeks later. Luckily it was not damaged as badly as before. Research, documentation, application, pictures, etc. were finalized for the HTC (Historic Texas Cemeteries) marker for the Duran Cemetery, and the application was submitted on September 24, 2017. Jo exchanged email messages with David McGlamery who has family buried in the Middlebrooks Cemetery in Dripping Springs. Because the area was very overgrown, Jo provided the information on its location from the HCHC website and offered to help locate the cemetery. She also described cleaning possibilities and an HTC designation.
  6. **Historical Marker Committee Report**—Marie Bassett reported that the pending 2017 markers, Kyle Family Pioneer Cemetery and Stringtown, were about 30th in the queue so the intended marker text should arrive soon. They should hear by

the end of October if Antioch Cemetery would be granted an undertold (underrepresented) marker. The 2018 marker window would be open until November 15, but applications should be submitted well before that date in order for the marker chair to approve and submit them. Also, Mimi Gaitán was intending to submit an application for the Cuauhtémoc Hall in San Marcos, and Jerry T. Moore was still working on the Jacob's Well site. Both of those could be candidates for the underrepresented markers. Charlie Haydon, a historian in Dripping Springs, would like a subject marker for W. T. Chapman (the man who laid out Dripping Springs) who lived in Charlie's "Homestead at Dripping Springs" (AKA Marshall Chapman House) which is situated just above the Dripping Springs and encapsulates part of the Moss family's cabin. This was the first cabin built in the area and was home to several other important Dripping Springs residents. Patsy Hurlbut would like a subject marker for "Dead Man's Hole" which is north of Dripping Springs. Marie also said that she had been helping Jo Landon with Gina Rogers' application for a HTC designation for the Duran Cemetery. Enough research had been done so that, should a marker be desired later, it would be an easy matter to finish the application. She also presented a program for the Dripping Springs Rotary Club by outlining what the HCHC does, including the marker program and including some local history. On Friday, October 6, THC would be holding a free marker refinishing and application workshop from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Fort Concho in San Angelo. The Historical Marker committee hoped to begin refinishing some county markers when the weather cools off.

7. **Horticulture Committee Report**—Marie Bassett reported for Delbert Bassett and said that the committee had been idle since May and might visit all of the Hays County historical tree sites to determine their current condition. Any deficiencies would be listed and plans made to correct problems. Many thanks were given to Jo Ann Lowe for her work in maintaining the Kyle Depot Garden.
8. **Hispanic History Committee Report**—Mimi Gaitán offered her best wishes and prayers to co-chairman, Ofelia Vásquez-Philo for a quick recovery and offered her deepest heartfelt condolences on the loss of Ralph Randow. She said that she had been working on the Memorial Highway section dedicated for San Marcos Police Officer Alfonso Rodriguez. The resolution was at the San Marcos City Council, and she was waiting on a status report. The Historical Marker application on behalf of the Cuauhtémoc Hall missed the deadline due to slow response by text, email and phone. Mimi was appointed as Public Relations Committee Chairperson by the San Marcos PD Citizens Alumni. A Community Outreach Project in the C. D. Wallace addition took place with hotdogs, burgers, beverages, and a town hall meeting where the neighbors could approach SMPD Chief of Police and SMPD Officers as a group or one on one. Mimi also described the certification she received from the University of Texas that allows her to take oral histories of veterans with a focus on Hispanic history and stories.
9. **Courthouse Committee Report**—Linda Coker said that Leadership San Marcos met at the courthouse for a member reception and asked her to have the museum open. On October 17, she would be giving a talk at the Four Rivers Realtors' Luncheon about State and Federal Tax Credits. She attended a meeting with her

as the representative from HCHC and people from the Heritage Association of San Marcos, Main Street, Center for Indigenous Cultures, Price Center, El Centro and the City. They discussed preservation and the need for San Marcos groups to come together in preservation efforts. The city does not have any sort of preservation master plan for the different historic districts, including downtown.

10. **Announcements**—Members enjoyed the online video shared by Linda Coker about San Marcos in the 1940's. Mimi Gaitán even recognized her grandfather in the film. Kate Johnson told members that Bert Cobb, Hays County Judge, was ill and was not able to attend the Commissioners Court meetings. Luanne Cullen shared information about an upcoming workshop at the San Marcos Activity Center, "Exploring Early Texas Art of the 19<sup>th</sup> to mid-20<sup>th</sup> Centuries."

**Adjourn**—Jerry T. Moore moved that the meeting adjourn; Marian Oles seconded the motion. Motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

After the meeting, Kate Johnson described the history of the Old Fish Hatchery in San Marcos from its establishment in 1893 on 25 acres at the foot of Chautauqua Hill to its move to its current location after it was donated to the City of San Marcos after the new Aquatic Biology Center was built in 1981.

Originally, the fish hatchery was responsible for breeding fish to stock streams and ponds used for sport. The hatchery engaged in an experimental program testing new techniques of hatchery production while also breeding tilapia in an effort to introduce non-native fish for game fishing. Toward the end of its operations, the facility stocked largemouth black bass, bluegill sunfish, and channel catfish, all of which were placed in national waters supervised by the federal government. After the hatchery closed in 1965, it was given to Southwest Texas State University for use by the Department of Biology for education and research.

Kate introduced Gary Brown, an Aquatic Biologist for Johnson Lake Management Service, who described early hatchery systems, such as gathering fish eggs, simulating male protection processes, and the feeding and releasing of fingerlings.

Supper followed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Luanne P. Cullen  
HCHC Secretary

*(photos courtesy of Luanne Cullen)*

