

## HAYS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION MINUTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2007

### THE NARROWS ON BLANCO RIVER AT HAYS/BLANCO COUNTY LINE

At first glance it appears to be an early spring, mountain stream landscape with ice-capped rocks in the midst of a creek running with the winter's snow and ice thaw. But this is not a landscape located in the Rocky Mountains. It is in the Texas Hill Country on the Hays/Blanco County line where a coral reef once thrived in land covered by an ocean, now dry and frozen in time, fossilized with limestone and covered in white travertine foam, The Narrows forms a funnel of rock and stone cut into the hill country landscape through which the Blanco River flows to mingle with the San Marcos and Guadalupe Rivers



The travertine foam looks like ice on The Narrows at this point.



The fossilized coral reef forms a long canyon through which the Blanco River flows at this point. HCHC member Richard Kidd kneels down for a better look. photo by Paul Keese

downstream, seeking its way back to the water from which it was born.

Deep pools have been etched out for swimming and tunnels pushed through the river base rock connecting the pools for exploring. Several varieties of fern grow from the twenty-foot high sides of the stone and rock canyon, burnished and smooth by rapidly flowing flood- waters. It is a conservation area where an ancient landscape is juxtaposed against a modern one creating a ruggedly beautiful, unique central Texas hill country landscape. It was one that twenty-five Hays County Historical Commission members and guests were happy to explore and admire.

The meeting was called to order at 6:55 p.m. with 25 members and guests present and slightly winded from hiking around The Narrows. Robert Flocke moved to accept Sept.28, 2007 meeting minutes. Jim Cullen seconded.

Chairman Kate Johnson announced the Kyle school historical marker dedication would be held in the Kyle Elementary gymnasium on October 27 at 2 p.m. She encouraged all members to attend the ceremony stating that this was our reason for being – awarding and approving historical markers.

Bonnie Eissler reported that Betty Harrison has completed the Buda Boys (Moe Johnson & Bob Barton) interview. Jim Lanning will interview Ophelia Philo next.

The Seven Townsend Brothers of Texas written in 1974 by Tula Wyatt is a wonderful book to reprint, containing stories of early Tejas and a comprehensive genealogy chart. Fitting also because Wyatt was the first chairman of HCHC. Chairman Johnson has a copy, but she is mum on how she managed that feat. Permission to reprint will have to be obtained from Wyatt's son who works at San Marcos Baptist Academy.

Yea! Limestone Ledges books are here!! Well, at least half of them were delivered. The remainder should arrive by November 1, LaMarr Petersen reported. He also stated one copy has already been sold with some quibble about the \$45 price tag. He pointed out the first printings sold for \$30 so we are going to hold firm at the price, at least for now. Memory Lane in Buda, Cottage Kitchen in San Marcos, Visitors Center in Wimberley and secondary schools in the area are good places to have copies for sale. We need publicity in Free Press and San Marcos Record saying we have more copies for sale.

Shelley Henry had historical places in Hays County brochures available in handy take-home packets for members to help disperse throughout the county in places for visitors and locals alike to pick up and (hopefully) visit the special historical locations listed. She also reported the historical marker on Hutchison Street in San Marcos for San Marcos Academy is now back at with them on Ranch Road 12.

Small in number, but mighty in stature, the fundraising committee sold \$461 in books at the Hays County Fair and Driftwood Day celebrations. "More than all of last year," said LaMarr Petersen. He also implored members to alert the committee to up coming events early in order to have a representative there. HCHC will be selling books at the Hays County anniversary celebration. The search for a perfect slogan is ongoing. Contact Shelley Henry, Kate Johnson or LaMarr Petersen if you have an inspiration. Don't be intimidated by professional ad agencies. Remember the lady who won the Texas Lottery logo was a "housewife."

More than ghostly doings at cemeteries these days as reported by Jim Cullen. Lehman High School National Honor Society returns to Coronado Cemetery Saturday, October 27, to conduct a historical survey, photograph and possible mapping under guidance of Texas historical Commission's Anne Shelton.

Coronado (Kyle) and Cocke (Buda) cemeteries are currently receiving periodic maintenance from HCHC. Coronado is in relatively good condition as winter approaches and Cocke is emerging from summer overgrowth once again. Attention is needed at Byrd-Payne Cemetery, south of San Marcos on Hunter Road and inside the newly reconstructed fence at Nichols Cemetery.

The Hector Family Cemetery Association held its annual meeting Saturday, October 13, in San Marcos. HCHC was represented at their ceremony and group business meeting.

Richard Kidd has the agenda for tonight's HCHC meeting up on the website. Corrected minutes from each meeting will also go up.

There is a tree growing out of the south wall on the old jailhouse reported Chairman Kate Johnson. \$130,000 sits in the bank waiting for the restoration, but title of building still rests with Preservation Associates. Work can only begin when transfer of ownership is made to the county. As the delay stretches on, time's a wasting and the tree keeps on growing.

It was 7:20 p.m. The sun had set in the western sky over the Blanco. The written word was illegible on paper. Twilight had melted into night with only a few small lanterns hanging from age-old oak trees were casting a soft glow over our group. Hamburgers and sausage hot dogs sizzled on the grill over a

campfire calling us to eat. We stood in unison as Linda Coker moved to adjourn and Jim Cullen seconded.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Keese, Recording Secretary