

HAYS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION



Thursday, September 25, 2014

**Charles S. Cock House
400 East Hopkins Street
San Marcos, Texas 78666**

The September 25, 2014, meeting of the Hays County Historical Commission was called to order at 6:25 p.m. by Chairman Kate Johnson. A quorum was met as the following HCHC members were present: Sue Cohen, Linda Coker, Jim Cullen, Luanne Cullen, Robert Frizzell, Dorothy Gumbert, Betty Harrison, Shelley Henry, Carmen Imel, Kate Johnson, Richard Kidd, Jo Landon, SarahAnn Lowther, Ida Miller, Jerry Moore, Ofelia Vásquez-Philo, and Ralph Randow. Five guests also attended.

Announcements: Kate Johnson said that the next HCHC meeting would be held on Friday, October 17, at the old Buda depot which was moved to Comal County in the 1990's. The meeting would begin at 6:15 p.m. She also mentioned that the two-year cycle of HCHC membership would be ending and that applications would need to be completed before December 19, 2014. The application form is on the HCHC website under the "Members" link. Brief reports were given by members who had attended various workshops and seminars, such as the THC's "Story of Texas," the Texas General Land Office's "Save Texas History," and "Understanding How to Secure Financial Resources."

1. **Vote on accepting minutes from August 21, 2014**—Dorothy Gumbert moved to accept the minutes; Jerry Moore seconded the motion. Motion passed.
2. **Oral History Committee Report**—Sue Cohen reported that the essays from previous interviews should be completed by the end of the year. Sue and Jo Landon had taken some still shots of photos belonging to Ofelia Vásquez-Philo in order to include them in the essay written by Marie Bassett based on the original oral history interview transcript. That essay with photos should be completed and printed soon.
3. **Cemetery Committee Report**—Jim Cullen reported that the Byrd Owen-Payne Cemetery in old Stringtown had been cleaned since Richard Gomez had mowed and removed a dead tree the previous week. The Cemetery Committee will tour a number of San Marcos-area sites on Saturday morning, October 4. Details would be emailed as to a meeting time and sites within a few days.
4. **City of Kyle and Auction Oak Report**—Kate reported that the City of Kyle had provided funds to complete the Kyle Depot and the final work should be finished in about three months. The restored depot will serve as a museum and visitors

- center for Kyle. Kate is continuing to research the founding of Kyle in anticipation of the completion of this restoration project. She has found several references to the various auctions for lots in Kyle, which had been named in honor of Ferg Kyle. She is also continuing to search for information about the Auction Oak on Sledge Street in Kyle to determine whether or not it was the actual site of the auction of lots.
5. **Ecology Committee Report**—Luanne Cullen reported for Delbert Bassett that the oldest oak trees along FM 967 seem to be surviving TxDOT's initial attempt to cut them down. A copy of the *Free Press* was shared with the article about the trees and the people's attempts to save them. The report also included information that the effort had been renewed to complete the nomination process for getting the Burleson Oak and the Dr. Pound Oak designated as Famous Trees. Also, all trees were loving the recent rain.
 6. **Historical Marker Committee Report**—Betty Harrison reported that the Eddie Durham marker had arrived and would be installed by the City of San Marcos soon. The city wants to have the marker dedication during the Eddie Durham Jazz Festival in the spring. She said that the text for the FBC-NBC (First Baptist Church-National Baptist Convention) marker is still being finalized by THC. Also, the marker application period is open until November 15. She asked members to let her know by phone or email if anyone is interested in pursuing a marker. She also mentioned that she would be working with the Arcadia Publishing Company on a picture book about the history of Kyle and would like to list the Hays County Historical Commission on the title page as "co-author" (or other designation) of the book. Members were also asked to let her know of any old photos of Kyle that could be used with permission by owners.
 7. **Hispanic Committee Report**—Ofelia Vásquez-Philo thanked everyone from HCHC who attended the 4th anniversary ceremonies at Centro Cultural Hispano de San Marcos the previous Saturday. Luanne Cullen also reported that the museum at the Centro had been named for Ofelia at that event and that many dignitaries, friends, and family members had attended to honor her.
 8. **Courthouse Committee Report**—Linda Coker reported that the courthouse and museum had been busy during the last month. She thanked the HCHC members who had participated in the Passport to San Marcos on August 22 to welcome Texas State freshmen; the Ice Bucket Challenge to raise awareness and funds for ALS on September 2; and the Texas State Parents' Weekend Wine Walk on September 12. Also, Joshua and Rebecca Hays from Waco, Texas visited the courthouse on August 22 and were pleased to see how his relative, Jack C. Hays, had been memorialized in so many ways. Linda also announced that the Texas Preservation Trust Grant Program nominations deadline was October 3; the 1884 Jail would be receiving the Heritage Association of San Marcos (HASM) Landmark Award at the October 30 banquet; the HASM cemetery walk would be held on October 18 at the San Marcos Cemetery; and the Wine and Wassail Walk would be held on November 14 at the Courthouse. Linda also reported that the first gay pride day had been held on the courthouse lawn on September 6 and was well attended which brought many visitors to the museum.

9. **Cultural Arts Committee for Government Center**—Linda Coker said that a reception for the Art Program at the Hays County Government Center would be held on Thursday, October 16, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. All HCHC members were invited to attend.
10. **Samuel T. Washington's Memorial**—Kate reported that the HCHC had erected a memorial tombstone in the Kyle Cemetery to honor Samuel T. Washington (a grand-nephew of President George Washington) who died in Mountain City in 1869 or 1870. The story of Samuel had been woven by letters, interviews, and artifacts from Isaac Julian of the *San Marcos Free Press*, W. W. Haupt of Mountain City, and Lafayette Mitchell in 1885. Bob Barton of the *Hays Free Press* revived the story in 1998 and reissued the challenge to provide a fitting memorial to Samuel. The Hays County Historical Commission met the challenge, and a ceremony to commemorate Samuel T. Washington would be held in the next few months at his memorial tombstone in the Kyle Cemetery.
11. **Adjourn**—Jerry Moore moved to adjourn the meeting; Carmen Imel seconded the motion. Motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m. Information and tours of the Charles S. Cock House and Eli T. Merriman Cabin were provided before supper was served.

Respectfully submitted,
Luanne P. Cullen, HCHC Secretary

[Photos courtesy of Jim Cullen]

