



Collin County Historical Commission
Collin County Courthouse
Bloomdale Road
McKinney, TX

Date: 08.29.19
Heard Craig Carriage House
205 West Hunt, McKinney
6:30 PM

Mary Kaye Adams, Dallas
Becky Airhart-Smith, Valdasta*
Alfredo Arias, Communications/Media*
Catherine Casavant, Treasurer
Chris Krupa-Downs, Plano
Joy Gough, Tax Abatement
Linda Hess, Farmersville
Donna Jenkins, Vice Chair
Diann Jones, Anna
Lolisa Laenger, CCHC Emeritus
Diane Miller, Melissa*
Kim Peat, Anna
Janice Quick, Film Preservation
Paula Ross, Chair
Jan Samuels, Fairview
Justin Simmons, Plano*
Jan Thatcher, Secretary
Marianne Wells, State Markers, Cemeteries
Jane Yancey, Plano
Eric Nishimoto, Liaison

Absent*

Call to Order: 6:32 pm

Welcome Guests: Kay Tolivar and Linda Dillard, Friends of Wilson Chapel Cemetery, McKinney; Jennifer Wakefield, Wylie Historical Society; Karen Zupanic, Heard Craig Center for the Arts, McKinney; Jerry Edwards, Elm Grove Cemetery, Westminster.

Public Comments: Thank you, Chris Krupa-Downs for our meal.

Eric Nishimoto's last day with the county will be Monday, 09.30.19. Thank you, Eric, for your 12+ years as our Collin County Liaison. You will be missed. We are grateful and appreciative of your years with us. Best of Luck to you.

The next Quarterly Coalition Meeting will be held on Thursday, 10.17.19 at 7 pm, MPAC, McKinney.

The Collin County Genealogy Society's next meeting will be on Wednesday, 09.11.19 at the Haggard Library, Plano, at 6:30. The topic will be "How to Get Started" with genealogy research. There will be five members of the CCGS who will speak on different topics.

Alfred Arias will be speaking on Thursday, 09.06.19 at the El Dorado Country Club at 10:30 am, talking about his "I Dig Collin County," which is his effort to get kids interested and involved in the history within the county.

On Sunday, 09.29.19, there will be another Texas Film Round-Up, sponsored by the Texas Archive of the Moving Image (TAMI). All are welcome to bring in films and videotapes for free digitization. The group is encouraging Veterans to submit films and tapes about life in Military Service. The materials will be digitized in Austin and returned to the owner's original submission along with a digital copy. The event will be held from noon-7 pm at Cinemark West, 3800 Dallas Pkwy, Plano.

Anna Area Historical Society will dedicate the Anna Train Depot on Saturday, 09.21.19 from 10 am-2 pm. Location of the Depot is at Sherley Heritage Park, 101 S. Sherley St. in Anna.

The absence of Alfred Arias and Justin Simmons was noted. Alfred was taking his oath to become a US Citizen. Justin notified Paula Ross that his wife was in labor. Congratulations to both.

Minutes and Roll Call: Minutes were accepted as written. Total volunteer hours: 460

Treasurer's Report: Of our budget of \$49,900, \$48,818 was spent or encumbered leaving \$1082. \$1000 of amount was set aside for emergency grants and not used. The treasurer's report was approved.

Election of Officers: A vote was taken and approved for the 2019-2020 nominees. The officers will be: Paula Ross, Chair; Donna Jenkins, Vice Chair; Catherine Casavant, Treasurer; Jan Thatcher, Secretary.

Committee Reports:

Grants: Grant contract were signed by all recipients on Monday, 08.26.19. The contracts will be presented to the Commissioners Court for final approval at a later Court session. Once approved, the county will process and send checks to the historic organizations. Checks should be going out in October.

There were three Final Reports given for grants awarded in the 2018-19 fiscal year. Karen Zupanic with the Heard Craig Center for the Arts used grant funds to document seven oral histories using Stonebridge Videography. The project took many hours for research, filming and editing. During her presentation, Karen shared snippets of the final project and presented the CCHC with a copy of all oral histories.

Jerry Edwards with the Elm Grove Cemetery, located near Westminster, used grant funds to continue restoration of markers in the cemetery. This was Phase 2 of 3. Both phases of restorations were done by McWilliams Cemetery Curbing and Leveling.

Jennifer Wakefield, President of the Wylie Historical Society presented the Historical Commission with a few of the brochures the Wylie Historical Society were able to update using grant funds. The self-guided tour brochures will be placed in prominent places around Wylie. 4000 brochures were printed with plans to put it online and have it linked to the State and County websites.

State Markers: There is still no vendor for state historical markers.

Supplies have been received and are awaiting cooler weather to begin the marker restoration project. Jan Samuels has been inspecting markers in her area to add to the restoration list.

The Snow Hill Cemetery, Blue Ridge marker inscription has been approved and sent to the Texas Historical Commission.

Walnut Grove Cemetery, Rhea Mills: Jane and Marianne visited the cemetery to inspect the Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) plaque there. It is in poor condition and should be replaced. Also, the marker represents a church building that no longer exists on the site. An addition plaque should be added to update the information.

Real Places Conference (Friends of the THC): Jane Yancey and Marianne Wells are registered for the January conference. Both are especially looking forward to the all-day program on cemeteries the day before the main conference starts.

Cannon Cemetery, Melissa – Marianne Wells filed a “Notice of Existence” with the County Clerk and sent a copy to the landowner. Marianne was contacted immediately by the landowner’s attorney expressing full cooperation with Marianne to verify the cemetery. Marianne is now awaiting a Sheriff’s permission form to enter the property.

Kelly Cemetery, Anna: The letter to the developer/landowner was returned as undeliverable to the address the Central Appraisal District uses for tax notices. Apparently, some large landowners use an outside service to process taxes. Marianne did drive by this month to check on the progress and saw very little change since visiting in June. She has called a descendant of Collin McKinney for more information and is awaiting a response.

Lair Cemetery, Anna: Marianne has spent a great deal of time at the courthouse looking for a deed for the cemetery, part of the process for a Historic Texas Cemetery Designation (HTCD). Marianne is recording her searches for the Texas Historical Commission in case it is not found and had the county clerk’s office helping with the search.

Slater Cemetery, Anna: Diane Miller attempted to receive permission to visit the property to no avail. The committee will pursue access in the fall. This is a very small cemetery in the woods on the original homestead of an early settler who was the grantor and patentee of two surveys, one being the location of the Lair Cemetery. The current landowners do not understand their legal responsibility to provide ingress and egress to a cemetery on their property.

Woodlawn Cemetery, New Hope: Diane spoke with the landowner about visiting the cemetery. The owner mowed the pasture to make it accessible for the committee. Jane, Diane and Marianne went through three gates and over a cattle guard to reach the idyllic cemetery where early settlers are buried. Jimmy Geigas, the first soldier from Collin County to be killed in WWI is buried here. There is a state historical marker there and is in good shape.

Smith Cemetery, Frisco: Susanne Kerley with the Frisco Museum has been in contact with the developer of a 2000-acre tract around this cemetery and asked the CCHC get involved in our capacity as protectors of cemeteries within the county. Susanne visited the cemetery with three generations of descendants from the original settlers earlier this summer and hopes to conduct an oral history with the family this fall. Marianne pulled the deed, found the cemetery on an old topographical map and had Jenny McWilliams with the THC, put it on the State Atlas to protect it. Also, in her research Marianne found 20 graves, 16 of which are babies and young children.

Marianne and Jane met with Marianne's attorney to discuss CCHC guidelines to protect cemeteries when working with Planning & Zoning Departments in the development process and with Smith Cemetery specifically. It was discovered that Fehmi Karakan, who developed the Shops at Legacy and Legacy West, in Plano is in a joint venture with Hunt Properties to develop the site. Karakan did a splendid job protecting the historic Baccus Cemetery on Legacy at North Dallas Tollway and commissioned stunning bronze longhorns which are in front of the cemetery. (A nod to the Shawnee Trail which passed nearby.) Marianne hopes to talk to the developer's attorney in the next week to offer the CCHC's support to the developer's efforts and to contribute historical research of the property and the early settlers.

Harris Cemetery, Josephine: Linda Hess, Joy Gough, Jane and Marianne went to the sight of the old Harris Ranch. Monuments in the family cemetery were removed in the mid 1970's. With the help of Linda's neighbor, Bob Trimble, the group attempted to find traces of the monuments original positions but had no luck. Marianne would like to go back at a later date, after the grass dies to look at a site that Jenny McWilliams (THC), identified on historical aerial maps, as a possible location of the cemetery itself. In the meantime, Marianne will file a "Notice of Unverified Cemetery" with the County Clerk in a general area. The group also visited these cemeteries within the county: Prairie Grove (Aleo-Nevada), Twins, Jones-Yearly, Lovell, Liberty (all in the Farmersville area), McMinn (Josephine) and also drove by the site of Cowskin and the Cowskin (aka Harris) School. It proved to be a very informative day.

County Markers: The marker for the Cowskin Community was turned in. Purchase order was turned in to the County and information was turned in to All-Craft Wellman, the sign company. Proofs were viewed, approved for castings and are in progress.

Educational Programs: Alfred Arias has notified Paula Ross that he will be stepping down as Chair of the Educational Programs Committee.

Communications: There is nothing to report at this time.

Tax Abatement: The Deadline for new applications is Thursday, 10.31.19.

Historical Assets Survey: Things have been moving slowly. Joy Gough has been working with Donna Jenkins to learn how to read the information on the Directory of All Sites and has included the committee's newest member, Diann Jones.

Film Preservation: Janice Quick distributed flyers for the next Texas Film Round-Up to be held on Sunday, 09.29.19 from noon – 7 pm at Cinemark West Plano and XD, 3800 Dallas Pkwy. Drop off any films and video tapes. Examples of accepted film include home movies, local commercials, educational, industrial, promotional, PSA and more. There is a call for Veteran Families to bring films & videotapes

about life in Military Service. The materials will be digitized for free and returned to the submitter with a digital copy.

Workshop Report: “Understanding Audiences and Visitors” was a workshop, sponsored by the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and Texas Association of Museums (TAM), presented by Erin McClelland and attended by Janice Quick in Denton, TX on Tuesday 08.06.19. Janice thought it was a great presentation and found these points worthwhile:

- Asking the question, “Why are we not reaching other audiences?” Many organizations focus on who comes to their museum now. It was suggested to think about who **doesn’t** come to your museum? Use US Census Bureau data to find out who isn’t coming to your museum. (See US Census Bureau below.)
- Use the museum to orient newcomers to their new hometown. Many areas, like Collin County, are growing. Therefore, there are two audiences that may not be served as well as could be: 1) Newcomers to the area and 2) Ethnically diverse audiences. In Collin County, these audiences probably overlap. It was suggested using the museum to orient newcomers. Show how the area became what it is today. (Sometimes history museums focus on early settlement and leave out recent growth, like factories following WWII or the high-tech boom.)
- Design a “mini” exhibit and place it where the audience is (e.g. in public areas like a bus stop.) Make it small or one panel so it can be consumed in the amount of time the audience has.
- Talk to the audience. Don’t assume you know what they want; just talking makes them feel more appreciated.

US Census Bureau: How to access US Census Bureau Quick Facts, ACS Demographic Estimates

1. Go to <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045218>
2. On the upper left side of the page, enter your city (or, if you live in a city or town with less than 5,000 people, enter your county.) NOTE: You may have to enter the city name more than once before the box populates with your city name to select.
3. Results will appear. The results include estimates for the total population, and by age and sex, by race, by types of housing, education levels, income, types of businesses, etc.
4. Click on the magnifying glass icon in the column heading for your town or county to get links for more details.

Speaker’s Bureau: Justin Simmons had added his name to the list of speakers. Donna Jenkins had two possible candidates. The list of speakers can be accessed at:
https://www.collincountgytx.gov/historical_commission/Pages/CCHC-Speakers-Bureau.aspx

Commission Brochure: The brochures are a work in process.

Cruise: Things are in place for the September 7th bus tour to Bonham. There are 27 participants, meeting at the Jack Hatchell Administration Building at 8:30 with 9 am the departure time.

Adjourn: 7:56 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Thatcher, Secretary