



Collin County Historical Commission  
7117 CR 166  
McKinney, TX 75071

Date: 10.29.20 6:30 P.M.  
Heard Craig Carriage House  
205 West Hunt St., McKinney  
And Zoom meeting

Mary Kaye Adams, County Cruises  
Catherine Casavant, Treasurer  
Dave Cornette, Allen  
Joy Gough, Tax Abatement  
Linda Hess, Farmersville  
Donna Jenkins, Vice Chair  
Diann Jones, Anna\*  
Colin Kimball, McKinney\*  
Lolisa Laenger, Emeritus\*  
Diane Miller, Melissa\*  
Paula Ross, Chair  
Jan Samuels, Public Relations  
Justin Simmons, Speakers Bureau  
Jan Thatcher, Secretary  
Marianne Wells, State Markers, Cemeteries  
Jane Yancey, Plano\*  
Jennifer Rogers, Liaison\*  
Judy Florence, Liaison\*

\*Absent

Call to Order: 6:30 p.m.

**Public Comments:** Chestnut Square will have a Virtual Christmas Tour due to Covid-19. It has been reported that County Judge Chris Hill has been diagnosed with Covid -19. With the resignation of Justin Simmons and Catherine Casavant, the Treasurer's position is open. If anyone is willing to take on the position, please contact Paula Ross.

**Grant Report: Murphy Historical Society:** Donna Jenkins representing the Murphy Historical Society presented the Final Grant Report for a project partially funded by the CCHC. With the assistance of Texas Cemetery Restoration and Rusty Brenner, headstones were cleaned and repaired at the Decatur-Maxwell-Murphy Cemetery.

**Minutes/Roll Call:** Due to a computer problem the minutes of the October meeting were unavailable at the time of this meeting for approval. October minutes will be distributed at a later date. Total volunteer hours reported were 238.

**Treasurer's Report:** With the budget of \$49,900, \$715 was encumbered for meeting places, leaving \$49,185 left in the budget. The treasurer's report was approved as presented.

**Committee Reports:**

**Speakers Bureau:** With Justin Simmons' resignation, there is an opening to Chair this committee. Please contact Paula Ross if interested.

**Film Preservation:** There is nothing to report at this time.

**Collin County Cruise:** There is nothing to report at this time.

**Grants:** Historical groups awarded this year have received checks from the County.

**State Markers: Saigling House (Plano):** The Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHL) marker has shipped. Marianne Wells will look into the County installation as well as the National Register of Historic Places plaque. The preservation architect has agreed to delay the marker dedication until it is safe to do so with the present Covid-19 pandemic and the interest of so many people to attend.

**Stiff Chapel Cemetery (Melissa):** Refinished marker with the John Abston Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) team.

**Walnut Grove Cemetery (Prosper):** Dave Cornette visited the two cemeteries to assess condition. The RTHL for the church building, which was torn down in 1992, is attached to a very wobbly stand. Marianne sent a picture to Bob Brinkman, with the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Marker Department for advice.

**Historic Cemeteries: Ross Cemetery:** Most of Marianne Wells' time this month was spent on documenting the history of Ross Cemetery. Marianne did confirm that DART owns a 100' easement on either side of the railroad tracks which includes land outside the eastern fence line. Jane Yancey joined Colin Kimball and Marianne in the cemetery to identify cultural and native fauna and significant features to put on the site plan. Because the cemetery's deeds also involve those of Pecan Grove Cemetery, it has been time consuming to thoroughly understand the ownership of the land. Neither organization seems to have any records for the transactions other than what are in the County Deed Records which make verifying anecdotal information virtually impossible. Marianne is including Colin Kimball as a submitter on the Texas Historical Cemetery (HTC) designation application as well as Deborah Kilgore, who worked on it for several years but died before she could finish. So far, 66 veterans have been identified from WWI-Viet Nam War. They include a Buffalo soldier, a soldier who died in France during WWI, Allen's only "Doughboy," Jake Chamberlain, who lived in three centuries, and Edward S. Doty, for whom the Doty School (McKinney) was named.

**Horn Cemetery (McKinney):** The City of McKinney received a request for permission to "restore" the Horn Cemetery near Erwin Park in McKinney. Dave Cornette visited the cemetery to assess the current condition. Marianne had a long conversation with Kent Horn, a great-great nephew of Elder Horn, and discovered the cemetery has a fund for maintenance as the result of restitution being paid by the families of vandals several years ago. Kent put Marianne in touch with the current cemetery association

president who has talked to the person who wanted to clean it up. This person's plan includes raising money to restore markers and working to acquire a 501(c)3 designation to apply for grants. Permission was granted for the Plano Conservancy to erect an informational wayside sign and is seeking permission from the City of McKinney to erect it. The funding for the sign came from the CCHC Grant program.

***Stimson Cemetery (Allen):*** A number of committee members were involved in investigating a FaceBook post concerning development around Stimson Cemetery on Chelsea Blvd. That is the cemetery where all the markers were moved to the Abston Cemetery near Lavon. The committee finally determined the post was out of date and the map was incorrect. The map showed the cemetery across the road from its actual location. Since some people have thought there might be graves under the road, an investigation should be made in the area closest to the road before the property is developed. Marianne has encouraged the cultural resources consultant, who did locate the cemetery for the developer, to let the committee apply for a Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designation and place a marker. The developer at the time did not want to. Today, there is a marker telling the history of the land that has been fenced off. It refers to the slaves as domestic servants and states there are no human remains, which is inaccurate but may be comforting to the new residents of the neighborhood.

***Kennedy Cemetery (near Princeton):*** Marianne spoke to the realtor selling the land to the east of the parcel where Kennedy is located. It is being platted and will be developed. Marianne decided to wait to go to the cemetery until roads are established since it is difficult to access at this time.

***Cannon Cemetery (Melissa):*** Marianne has written to the landowner's lawyer for an update of the cultural resource's investigation and survey. Marianne has not heard back.

***Future projects for Marianne and committee:*** Update Webpage, work on Lair HTC designation application, continue work on the Orenduff Cemetery (Melissa) narrative, identify a THC contact information for all cemeteries, help update the THC master cemetery database for Collin County, and order correcting plaque for Forest Grove Christian Church (Lucas) marker.

**County Markers:** 6 markers are the goal for this year. Ross Cemetery is Colin Kimball's top priority. Another contender is the Black School, in Allen, adjacent to the Heritage Village.

**Communications:** This Chair position is open. Please contact Paula Ross.

**Public Relations:** There is nothing to report at this time.

**Tax Abatement:** The application period for County Historic Property Tax Abatement for 2021 ends October 31, 2020. As of October 29<sup>th</sup>, there have been 8 new applications for Historic Property Tax Abatement: 2 in Melissa and in McKinney, 5 residential and 1 commercial properties.

***The new properties in Melissa are:*** Osburn House, Highland Road and Parris Hill Farm, Highland Road.

***The new properties in McKinney are:*** Metz House, 309 North Bengel Street; Ditto-Dowell House, 313 North Bengel Street; Myrick House, 509 North Kentucky Street; Ed Browne House, 505 West Lamar Street; James Harris House, 608 West Virginia Street; Shain Block, 114-116 North Tennessee Street.

All of the tax abatement properties will be inspected in November. The recommendations for approval and denials will be made at the CCHC meeting in December.

**Historic Asset Survey (HAS):** The committee has yet to meet, but plans are made to meet before the next CCHC meeting for training. Members then can start on cemetery research. Members of the

committee have been sent some training materials, step by step instructions to access the County's interactive map, and the Directory of Assets. The Committee plans to meet in person in January for a status of the research. That will leave 7 months to accomplish the goal for all cemeteries before the County's fiscal year ending July 31, 2021.

Donna Jenkins has been using Joy Gough's book, "Cemeteries of Collin County, Texas" and cross-referenced Joy's list of cemeteries with the cemeteries already listed on HAS so there will be no duplications. The Committee can utilize Joy's research as well as other books to write narratives of the cemeteries not on HAS. Donna has also cross referenced the "Texas Historical Sites Atlas" online to cross reference the names of cemeteries in Joy's book and HAS. There are some not covered in Joy's book and some on the Atlas not on HAS. The Atlas gives the location which is necessary in doing research. Donna will make a list of cemeteries not on the Atlas to pass on to Marianne Wells for the Texas Historical Commission (THC). Donna believes Marianne is working with the THC to get them all on the Atlas.

**Education: Education Project:** Service-Learning for older students and college students. (This needs to be added to the Chairman's Report.)

Service Learning "engages students in valuable experiential learning through service opportunities that benefit the community." It is a partnership of colleges, universities, in addition to the public and private sector. Donna Jenkins believes the project will benefit and encourage students to work as volunteers in the areas of preservation, historical research and community service.

Donna met with Professor Pam Gaiter on the Wylie Campus of Collin College on October 19, 2020. The two initially met at the Service-Learning Fair in January 2019 and planned to start working on projects in 2020, but the Covid-19 Pandemic halted all planning. Professor Gaiter is very interested in starting projects in January 2021. Donna discussed the CCHC, the different committees and projects the CCHC is involved in and how collaborating with not only Professor Gaiter's classes but other departments on the campus. Both discussed a number of possibilities such as oral histories, cemeteries, public relations, media, photography, marketing, recording, video production, and preservation celebration. Professor Gaiter is presenting ideas to the faculty and will get back with Donna before the next semester begins. She will also share Donna's contact information with the Spring Creek Campus, where Professor Gaiter worked for several years. Hopefully the faculty will contact Donna for additional information. Donna will also speak individually with the departments who show interest in working with the CCHC on Service-Learning.

Any CCHC member who would like to work with a student or a group of students on one of the committee's projects, please let Donna know. Donna is also open to any suggestions for new ideas.

Adjourn: 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Thatcher, Secretary