

THE DALLAS COUNTY CHRONICLE

The Newsletter of the Dallas County Historical Commission

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Historical Marker Moratorium!

By Buddy Frazer, DCHC Chairman

The Texas Historical Commission has stopped accepting historical marker applications pending a major overhaul of the program. The moratorium went into effect June 1. No more applications will be accepted until later in the year.

The THC says this is the first major review of the marker process in four decades. The action follows the State Legislature's Sunset Review Commission's report which recommended changes to the program (see related story on page 4).

Changes are expected to include greater use of the Internet in the review and approval process. There will be an annual application deadline. Applications can be made online and interested parties will be able to track the review process online. To educate applicants on the new process, more educational materials will be provided, and training workshops will be held.

The THC intends to coordinate the state marker program with other historical designations such as the National Register of Historic Places and the Historic Texas Cemetery program. The THC will have the County Historical Commis-

sions play a larger liaison role between the applicants and the THC staff.

The THC will review the Statewide Preservation Plan to address gaps in the telling of Texas history that could be filed by the marker program. There are over 13,000 state historical markers in Texas. Therefore, more attention will be placed on the content of the markers so that they better document Texas history.

The THC expects to have new marker program guidelines in place in August. By September, online training resources should be in place.

New marker applications will begin to be accepted online in the November/December time frame. The deadline for new marker applications is planned to be January 2, 2007. Application approvals will be announced in April. All 2007 projects will be finalized by November.



The process then repeats itself for 2008.

The Dallas County Historical Commission will follow these developments with great interest. We will continue to report the progress of the changes with notices on our website (www.dallaschc.org) and in future issues of this newsletter.

In the past, marker program procedures have been frustrating for many applicants. Often the rules have changed with little notice while an application was being developed. We are hopeful that the THC will take this opportunity to make the process easier for those applicants who are not trained historians. We also hope the changes will result in clearer guidelines and a streamlined process that allows all residents to participate in documenting the history of Texas.

Inside this issue:

- Historical Marker Dedications, page 2
- New program at Sixth Floor Museum, page 3
- "Heroes" Exhibit at Dallas Historical Society, page 3
- Sunset Review Report on THC, page 4

Baylor College of Dentistry Marker Dedicated

The Baylor College of Dentistry celebrated 100 years of service with a historical marker dedication May 4. The College is located adjacent to Baylor Hospital in Dallas.

The school has had an interesting history. It was founded by two dentists, Dr. David Morrow and Dr. Thomas Bradford. Classes began on October 3, 1905 as State Dental College. The first classes were held over a grocery store on Commerce at the site of what is now the Adolphus Hotel.

The institution came close to bankruptcy several times before affiliating

with Baylor University in 1918. The Great Depression and the Baylor College of Medicine's move to Houston in 1943 furthered its economic woes until the 1950's. Then, with new leadership, the school was revived, and a dental hygiene school was added.

The college ended its affiliation with Baylor in 1971 and became a separate institution. The name was changed to Baylor College of Dentistry.

In 1996, it merged with the Texas A&M University System and became a founding member of the Texas A&M University System Health Science Center in 1999.

The centennial celebration lasted for over a year. Special events were held throughout 2005. The marker dedication concluded the festivities.

At the dedication, speakers included Baylor College of Dentistry Dean Dr.



Officials from Baylor College of Dentistry unveil their marker.

James S. Cole, Centennial Steering Committee Co-Chairman Dr. Robert V. Walker, and Dallas County Historical Commission Chairman Buddy Frazer.

Fourth-year dental student and Odonatological Honor Society President John Roberts presented a simulated unveiling of the marker in the auditorium where the ceremony was held (the actual marker is located on a busy street for better public visibility).

Concluding the ceremony, Centennial Public Relations Subcommittee Co-Chair Carolyn Cox described the 100-year time capsules of items selected for the event.



Dignitaries gather around the marker after the unveiling. (Photo courtesy Baylor College of Dentistry.)

Tripp Baptist Church Marker Dedicated April 1

Tripp Baptist Church in Sunnyvale dedicated a historical marker April 1 with a well-attended ceremony.

The church was organized in 1882 in the community of Tripp, which is one of the communities that forms today's Sunnyvale. The congregation originally

met in a school house across the street from the church's current location. When the congregation outgrew the school house in 1906, the members began collecting money to build a new building. In 1916, Kaufman County resident Richard Linn donated the property, and the building was dedicated in 1918.

Early church activities included summer revivals which were held in conjunction with other churches. Baptisms were performed in area creeks, ponds and even cotton gin tanks. The church has regularly held Christmas pro-



Unveiling the marker were Pastor Billy Kelley & Deacon Charles Tranthaam. (Tripp Baptist Church photo)

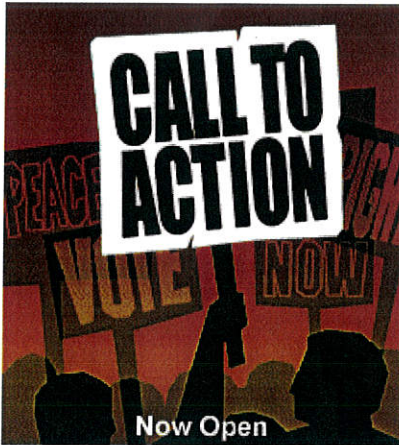
grams and family dinners throughout its history.

Today, Tripp Baptist remains a vibrant part of the Sunnyvale community.



A large crowd gathered for the event. (Tripp Baptist Church photo)

“Call to Action” Begins at Sixth Floor Museum



President John F. Kennedy's frequent espousal of public service provides the basis for *Call to Action*, now on exhibit at The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza. Through photographs, artifacts, narrative, and an extensive visual timeline spanning a period between 1955 and 1975, visitors discover the issues that influenced President Kennedy's "New Frontier", learn about the social movements that he influenced, and meet the Dallas residents and other Americans that he inspired.

The exhibit opened with a showing of the 1961 film *Dallas at the Crossroads* which was produced to help Dallas prepare for school desegregation. That was followed by a showing of the film *Crisis*, which documented President Kennedy's confrontation with Alabama Governor George Wallace over integration at the University of Alabama.

On July 12, the museum will present "The Gay Rights Movement in Dallas" featuring a panel discussion lead by Louise Young.

The August 2 program is "A Conversation with Vivian Castleberry." Ms. Castleberry, called the "grandmother" of Dallas journalism, will speak on the evolution of women's rights.

On September 6, "The SNCC Experience in Dallas" looks at the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. Bob Ray Sanders moderates.

On September 27, Mercedes Olivera leads a panel of distinguished guests looking at the Mexican American rights movement called "La Calle to City Hall."

The series concludes October 25 with "The Disability Rights Movement" which focuses on the events leading to the Americans with Disabilities Act. Dr. Richard Scotch of the University of Texas at Dallas leads a panel that includes Kent Waldrep.

All of the programs begin at 6:30 pm. The programs are free, but museum lot parking is \$4. Reservations are required by calling 214-747-6660 extension 6625 or emailing programs@jfk.org.

Texas Archeology Month

October is archeology month in Texas. For the past 16 years, the Texas Historical Society, the Texas Archeological Society, Council of Texas Archeologists and others have sponsored numerous programs across the state to teach people about archeology in Texas. In 2005, there were 85 events including 27 "Fairs." More information, including a calendar, will be forthcoming on the THC website, www.thc.state.tx.us.

(This article provided by the THC)

New THC Website Calendar

The Texas Historical Commission's new web site, www.thc.state.tx.us, has a new look along with an online calendar to enter your preservation-related events and meetings. Access the calendar at the top of every page to view monthly events, or submit your event for the calendar with the provided online form. The THC's publication *The Medallion* will no longer feature a preservation calendar.

The new site includes menus allowing quick access to information. You can search the calendar numerous ways through several topics to find items of interest. Emphasis is given to core THC programs and projects, easily found through a search feature on the left side of the page. The site also features the popular Texas History Atlas, the historic sites searchable database.

(This article provided by the THC)

Dallas Historical Society Looks at Texas Heroes

The "Texas Heroes: Courage, Honor, and Dignity" exhibit now open at the Dallas Historical Society tells the story of Texas heroes representing each era of Texas History. The heroes, depicted on posters throughout the exhibit, were selected through a statewide poll of museum curators and staff, historians, and key leaders. The people selected represent the rich diversity and culture of Texas.

The exhibit also includes audio recording of Texans from all walks of life telling who their heroes are and why.

The exhibit runs through Labor Day at the Hall of State in Fair Park. It is

open from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Saturday and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm on Sunday.



Collections Director Alan Olson (left) and Executive Director Michael Duty stand by one of the kiosks holding recordings of Texan opinions on heroes.

Texas Historical Commission Sunset Review

The Texas Sunset Commission, which periodically reviews the workings of most Texas agencies, has recently completed its evaluation of the Texas Historical Commission (THC). The Sunset Commission has recommended that the THC, which, with a budget of almost \$27 million and a staff of 120 people, serves as the State's principal historic preservation agency, continue to operate for another twelve years. The Sunset Commission, however, did identify three areas in THC's operations in which it believes revisions are needed.

The first of these areas involves the relationship between the THC and its associated non-profit corporation, the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission. Specifically, the Sunset Commission recommended that the THC Executive Director not be a voting member of the Friends organization. The Commission also requested that THC establish guidelines that would define the type of administrative and financial support that THC could give to the Friends. The purpose of these recommendations was to prevent any conflict of interest between the THC and the Friends.

The second area of recommendations involves establishing priorities for THC's preservation efforts. The Sunset Commission has asked that THC consider how each of its programs and initiatives relate to THC's goals and to determine which of these programs and initiatives should take priority within the context of

these goals. Based upon the importance of each program and initiative, THC should then assign resources accordingly.

The Sunset Commission recommendation that will have the greatest impact on the general public involves the State's historical marker program. The marker program is probably THC's most visible and popular program. Originally begun in 1936 to help commemorate the 100th anniversary of Texas' independence, there are now over 13,000 historical markers in Texas which is a total that is greater than that of any other state. However, the Sunset Commission is concerned that the effectiveness of this program as an educational and tourism tool is limited and that a more limited number of markers, which would be awarded based on statewide themes and significance, would be more beneficial.

Accordingly, the Sunset Commission has indicated that it believes the number of markers issued each year could be cut in half (THC presently receives about 220 applications a year and ends up approving about 200 of them) and that THC should only select the most qualified applications once a year. Towards this end, it has been recommended that THC discontinue its traditional practice of accepting applications throughout the year and that it instead accept applications only during

a specific time-frame, that it develop rules for ranking applications, and that priority be given to those applications that relate to specific statewide themes developed by the agency.

THC would still be able to continue to award markers for resources that are significant locally under this proposed approach, but, in general, these markers will have to also address the state themes as well. Only if the number of markers that THC approves in a given year is less than the maximum amount permitted would THC be able to consider awarding a marker for a resource that did not address a statewide theme. It is hoped that, by limiting the total number of markers in this way and that by awarding them on the basis of statewide themes and significance, a THC marker would remain more of an honor than a commodity.

In making these marker-related recommendations, the Sunset Commission recognized that THC should provide training and education in researching, documenting, and identifying historic resources to county historical commissions (CHCs) and communities. The Sunset Commission encouraged that this information be made available on the THC website and suggested that THC conduct workshops that would be targeted at assisting those CHCs with the greatest needs.

The Sunset Commission also recommended that the THC establish a reasonable marker application fee that would be submitted with each marker application. In setting this fee, THC should consider the approximate amount of staff time needed to evaluate an application. The revenues produced from this fee would be used to help fund the marker program.

In response to the Sunset Commission's report, THC has begun revising its marker program and has announced that it will no longer be accepting new applications until the revisions are completed. It is projected that these new guidelines will be announced in August 2006.

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The Dallas County Historical Commission is a county board appointed by the Dallas County Commissioners Court. The Dallas County Chronicle is a quarterly publication of the DCHC for historical groups in Dallas County and the general public. This issue was edited by Buddy Frazer and Rick Loessberg. It is published with the assistance of The Sixth Floor Museum. Articles should be sent to Buddy Frazer, via email at email@mpfservices.net, or by mail to the Dallas County Historical Commission, 411 Elm Street, 3rd Floor, Dallas, TX 75202-3301. Visit the DCHC on the web at www.dallaschc.org and the Dallas County government website at www.dallascounty.org.