

**Calhoun County Historical Commission**  
Regular Meeting of May 14, 2013  
6:30-8:00 p.m. at Calhoun High School Library  
201 Sandcrab Boulevard, Port Lavaca, Texas

**Minutes of the Secretary**

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Mary Belle Meitzen at 6:35 p.m.

**Invocation:**

The invocation was given by Avril Sassman.

**Pledges to the Flags:**

John Kassner, Sergeant-at-Arms/Parliamentarian, led the pledges to the United States and Texas flags.

**Quorum:**

John Kassner certified that there was a quorum present. Those in attendance were as follows:

Fabian Balboa	Nelson Marek	Avril Sassman
Joe D. Brett	John Meitzen	Tommy Schulte
George Anne Cormier	Mary Belle Meitzen	Walter Spiller
Peggy Dobbins	Joe L. Mireles	Philip Thomae
John Kassner	Jim Munro	Sue Thomae
Robert Loflin	Gary Ralston	Mike Dobbins (Guest)

**Approval of the Minutes of April 9, 2013:**

Secretary Sue Thomae stated that the minutes of the April 9, 2013, meeting were posted on the CCHC website. Chairman Meitzen reminded members and guests of the web address of the website: [www.calhouncountyhc.org](http://www.calhouncountyhc.org). The minutes were approved as posted.

**Approval of the Treasurer's Report:**

Treasurer Phil Thomae stated that the treasurer's report was posted on the CCHC website. He reported that there were no bills presented and no transactions conducted, but he did note that the summary report showed that Account 621 in the past 30-day period had decreased by \$250, the usual amount. Account 621 is the one designated for the transcribing of the George Fred Rhodes material, the work on which is done by Debby Stovall. At present, the account has only enough money to sustain that work for another 14 months, and this matter of the funding needs to be addressed after the first of the year. The report was

approved as posted.

### **Reports of Standing Committees:**

**Cemetery Committee:** John Kassner, Committee Chair, reported on the committee's work on the repair of Little Mary's gravesite. That report, which covers the work done on April 20, April 26, and April 27, is posted on the CCHC website. Chairman Kassner stated that the committee had worked more than 44 hours and that he would be working on the site on May 17 also.

Kassner also thanked Joe D. Brett for the use of his equipment in the extensive repair work. Also, he stated that pictures of the process were available on the website, 12 in all. Gary Ralston mentioned that he had a CD of 70 pictures of the process of the work on Little Mary's grave.

Chairman Meitzen reminded the commission that she and Kassner would be working on the application for the designation of Little Mary's grave as a Texas Historical Cemetery.

**Marker Committee:** Chairman Meitzen reported that the Seadrift marker is in the process of being moved. Also, she reported that the 4 markers scheduled for arrival in April, but not yet received, would be arriving this summer and that she would be calling on members to help arrange the dedication ceremonies.

**Museum Committee:** Chairman Cormier reported that she was working on the LaSalle exhibit, i.e., the best pieces, that would be going out. In addition, she reported that plans were underway for Doug Baum to bring his Texas Camel Corps next year on May 14, which is the anniversary of the arrival of the full complement of camels at Indianola. Also, Cormier reported that she had been contacted by a woman in Fort Worth who says she has a stained glass window from the Port O'Connor school and who has sent Cormier a picture of the window. Mary Belle suggested sources who might be able to verify the authenticity of the window.

**Heritage/Tourism Committee:** Walter Spiller recommended that the CCHC accede to the request of the County Fair Association to have a booth in the Educational Building at the county fair in October. Spiller made the motion that the CCHC have the booth which will involve setting up and taking down October 12 through 13. The motion was approved on a voice vote.

**History Appreciation:** Chairman Jim Munro stated his committee had not met but the members would be willing to help Chairman Meitzen host 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in their tour of the Half Moon Reef Lighthouse, as requested by the Chamber of Commerce. Meitzen stated that she would give a presentation on living at the lighthouse, especially since she had pots, pans, and a scrub-board to augment her remarks. The tour will take place

May 16 at 8:45 and 2:30 in conjunction with the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders' visit to the museum.

Also, in reference to the Half Moon Reef Lighthouse and the request from the Chamber of Commerce for access to the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders of CCISD, Cormier requested on behalf of the **Museum Committee** that the ham radio operators also be allowed to use the lighthouse for their annual gathering. Cormier made the motion to allow that usage and the motion was approved on a voice vote.

**Friends of the Museum:** Although it is not a standing committee of the CCHC, Jan Regan, Chair, reported by phone prior to the meeting to Commission Chair Meitzen that the plans for a new museum were 80% complete. When those plans are fully realized, the fundraising for a new museum would commence.

**Program:**

The program was introduced by Commission Chair Meitzen who reviewed the history of water sources in Port Lavaca from interviews she had with Randle Clay and D. J. Williams. Then Meitzen introduced Randle Clay to detail his childhood experiences as related to those water sources, especially the artesian well located at that time at the end of Commerce Street.

Mr. Clay reminisced about the primary sources of water as being cisterns, into which rain fell and which then supplied drinking water, and the artesian well, which was used for washing and for watering cattle and horses. He recalled hauling water from the artesian well in wagons along streets, some of which were dirt and some shell. The practice of hauling water was the prevalent method at one time, before the availability of city water. The artesian well had a four-inch pipe from which a steady stream of water ran, water which was good as well as being cool. Eventually the artesian well was capped and now the end of Commerce Street covers that location. Mr. Clay stated that the artesian well flowed during the 1940s and early 1950s.

**Commission Input:**

The following were mentioned: (1) There will be a marker workshop on June 29<sup>th</sup> in Beeville. One of the subjects will be directions on how to write a marker. (2) Chairman Meitzen would like to plan a family ice cream social for CCHC members this summer, so members should be looking for such an announcement.

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the CCHC will be August 13 at the Calhoun County Public Library.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Meitzen at 7:20 p.m. with no objections. The CCHC then took a field trip and reassembled at the site of the artesian well at the end of Commerce Street where Randle Clay continued to inform members of the history of that well and the life in Port Lavaca during his childhood.