



CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 2008

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CHS Remembers Tin Hall at Big Spring Event!

On April 8, 2017, CHS members gathered for the Big Spring Event in Juergen Hall. The focus of the event was “Memories of Tin Hall” in honor of this Cypress area landmark. Our guest speaker was former, and current owner, Fred Stockton of the Christen family. Fred gave a history of Tin Hall, then Terri Sigmund passed the microphone through the crowd so that memories of those who grew up here could be shared. While the property has been sold for real estate development, the name will live on as a new establishment on Fred’s property near Grant Rd. and Old Kluge Rd.

Tin Hall was originally the dance hall of the Cypress Gun & Rifle Club which formed in the 1890’s. Local members of the Club gathered for shooting contests, food and drink, and dancing! There is evidence that the hall burned down on at least three occasions, prompting the owners to finally re-build the structure with corrugated metal walls and roof. This gave rise to the well-known nickname of “Tin Hall”. While it began as a members-only club, it became a community location in the 1940’s for local picnics and barbecues, charity events (for churches and the Cy-Fair Volunteer Fire department), and for major events such as Dairy Day. From the

Fred Stockton tells of his plans to start a new chapter in the history of Tin Hall.

beginning, it was always a place where the entire family went . . . where children played and slept as their parents danced the night away. Tin Hall touched the lives of everyone who grew up around here.

Tammy Sherrill and her food crew served a lunch of fried chicken, and home-made side dishes made by the CHS Board. Delicious desserts were brought by the members, including the entries for the “Home-Made Dessert” contest! Students from Cy-Ranch interviewed the guests to capture even more memories, while door prizes were raffled off. CHS member Jerry Klumpp shot a great set of photographs that can be viewed at the CHS Library. It is clear from this event that Tin Hall will never be forgotten!



Eva Wilke Christen (left), Reinhold Wilke’s daughter, told us, “I was at Tin Hall as a baby, and I’m 93!”. Eva’s daughter, Geneva Zahn Featherstone (right) told the group, “There were a couple of times at the monthly shooting that I actually beat the men . . . And they didn’t like it!”



Lydia Froehlich Jordy (left) played accordion for us, and remembers Tin Hall as, “that’s where I learned how to dance. My Dad taught me how to polka and waltz”! Jane Krahn Ledbetter (right) met a visiting A&M boy, Ben Ledbetter, at Tin Hall in 1956. A year later, they married!

“MEMORIES OF CYPRESS . . .”

Tin Hall in Cypress *(excerpts of a larger story) by Frank Litt*

My memories of Tin Hall start at a very young age. I'm thinking about 1943, I was 5 years old . . . A tin building, no insulation, with large front doors painted white. The only way in was through these doors with matching ones on the back side. There were no glass windows. The windows were made of sheets of tin, standard size. The tin was attached to a 2 X 4 frame, hinged parallel to the top stud of the building framing. They were latched inside, and opened by pushing out and putting a board on each corner to hold it out. In those days, there were no outside stairs. To get to the dance floor upstairs you had to enter the front, and the stairs were on the left across from where you purchased your ticket.

On the ground floor as you entered you could see a long bar on the left starting just past the stairs. This bar served on both sides, indoors and outdoors. Many came to Tin Hall on Saturday night just to drink beer, socialize, and relax from the farming chores during the week. The inside sales were mostly for the dancers. No alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages were allowed upstairs by the dance floor. During intermission many came down stairs to have a refreshing drink (no hard liquor), and use the rest rooms. Well, really there were no restrooms, just outhouses on the back side, next to the lake.

Past the bar on the left side was a café in the left hand corner. On the right side after the ticket sales area were rows of picnic tables that were used on special occasions. Out the back doors, were the firing stations for the gun range . . . Rifle firing contests were held at each special event. These were mostly on Sundays with a dance at 2 pm after a barbecue meal.

After you purchased your ticket and went upstairs to the dance floor, first choice was, where to sit. All around on the wall was an attached bench to the framed tin wall. About four foot up from the bench was the push out windows all the way around so the air could circulate. NO air conditioning or heat was in this hall. On the East end there was a band stand. The band had taken regular intermissions and during that period the kids would have a great time running and sliding on the slippery floor . . . Coming to Tin Hall on Saturday night was a family affair. Many farming families would come have supper at the café - mainly hamburgers, fries, hotdogs and good chili. The kids would play down stairs with the older ones watching out for the younger ones . . . When the younger ones were tired and wanted to go to bed the family would have brought blankets to make pallets on the picnic tables or the floor. Some of the boys would be hired/asked to pick up beer bottles that were strewn all around the grounds and parking areas. We got \$.10 for each case of 24 empty bottles picked up and turned in to the bar. It seemed every \$.15 earned we headed to the café for a bowl of chili.



Barbara and Frank Litt met at Tin Hall in 1961. They were married at St. John Lutheran in May of 1962

THANKS TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS!

Our sincere appreciation goes out to our Big Spring Event Sponsors, whose contributions pay for the food and door prizes for our Members. Please visit them, and thank them for their support of the Cypress Historical Society!

Donations:

- **H.E.B. Cypress Market**
- **Walmart Supercenter-Cypress**
- **Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers**
- **Fiesta Mart**
- **Food Town**

Door Prizes:

- **Azul Italian Kitchen**
- **Skeeter's Auto Service**
- **Arthur Murray Dance Studio-Cypress**
- **Goodson's Cafe - Tomball**



Winners of the April 8th Home-made Dessert Contest were (l to r) Candace Christen Galindo, Beverly Christen Burt, and Mary Carr.

2017 CHS Scholarship Recipients

by the Scholarship Committee

CHS was pleased to present two scholarships honoring Gene and Delphine Zaboroski last month at the Cy-Fair and Cy-Ranch High School Awards Night. There were a total of four applicants this year, with Jordan Sherrill, a senior at Cy-Fair High School and Mackenna Shull, a senior at Cy-Ranch High School being this year's recipients. Jordan, who will attend Lone Star College, has volunteered at our Annual Picnic for the last 5+ years, and you will remember him singing Johnny Cash songs at our events! Mackenna, who will attend the University of Texas in Austin, has volunteered through her Key Club at school at our Annual Picnic. Both students have worked many additional hours in the Cypress community as well. The \$1000 scholarships will be used to help pay part of their expenses at their respective schools. The Society wishes the scholarship winners continued success in furthering their educations. Annual scholarships are made available through the generous donations of individuals and Society members to the Cypress Historical Society's Gene and Delphine Zaboroski Scholarship Fund.



High school seniors, Mackenna Shull and Jordan Sherrill, winners of the 2017 CHS "Gene and Delphine Zaboroski Scholarship" pose with the Zaboroskis at our Spring Event.

Cypress Historical Society

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Cypress, Texas 77410

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Darline Roth Research Library: 281-758-0083

Hours: Tue, Wed, Thur 9 - 4, & 3rd Sat 11 - 2



The Robison Elem. 3rd graders try to determine the use of the artifact that Jay Gavitt shows them. Helen Callender and Cel Guerra look on.

Rosehill Social Donation

CHS supported the Rosehill Social Club on May 21st by donating a "Texas Pride" gift basket. Contents included a CHS calendar, CHS Hat & T-shirt, CHS Koozie, 2 bottles of Texas wine, Texas kitchen towels, hot pad, oven mitt, and trivet, and a Texas License Plate Photo Frame with a photo of the 1907 Cypress Depot!



CHS at Inventor's Day

by Jim Sigmund

On May 19th, the Cypress Historical Society was the hit of Inventor's Day for the 3rd graders at Robison Elementary School. Wayne & Helen Callender, Jay Gavitt, and Jim Sigmund helped the students to use a corn sheller, learn about vintage hand tools, and describe and discover several artifacts from the CHS collection. The students were fascinated by the corn shellers (provided by Rodney Sprenger), and many of the children had never seen an ear of field corn before! They kept asking, "Is this real corn?" They filled their pockets with corn kernels, and took home the cobs to show their parents.

Wayne showed off his ever-growing collection of vintage tools, and explained how things were built before every tool had an 18v battery pack. Jay guided them to figure out what a "chicken catcher" was . . . the highlight was when Helen demonstrated catching Jay by the leg, as he was clucking like a chicken!

The Robison Elementary janitor will be cleaning up corn for a long time, but the students and teachers can't wait to have us back again next year!

Mark Your Calendars!

Jun 17– CHS Board Meeting

(All Members welcome)

Saturday, 9:00am at Darline Roth Library
Cypress Top Historic Park

Jun 24– Cy-Fair H.S. Reunion 1938-1957

(All alumni from 1938-1957 welcome)

Saturday, 10:00am to 3:00pm
Bear Creek Community Center

Jul 15 – CHS Board Meeting

(All Members welcome)

Saturday, 9:00am at Darline Roth Library
Cypress Top Historic Park

SAVE THE DATE!

Oct 7 –CHS Annual Mtg & Member Event

(Members & their Families welcome)

“Civil War Relics from Cypress”

Speaker: Eric Briggs & Rich Sandman

Saturday, Time: *TBD*

Juergen Hall, Cypress Top Historic Park



Cy-Ranch students who participated in the “Oral History Project”

Cypress-Ranch Students Interview CHS Members

by Jay Gavitt

Students from Cypress-Ranch High School continued their work with CHS members. The students interviewed CHS members at the “Memories of Tin Hall” program held April 8th in Juergen Hall at Cypress Top Historic Park. The interviews were part of the Cypress Historical Society’s “Oral History Project”. The project helps students acquire interviewing skills and apply them to build an oral history collection about the Cypress-Fairbanks area. The program centered on “Tin Hall”, a well-known dance hall in the area. Many of the members had grown up in the hall on weekends. Jim Wilson, Pct 3 historian, invited the students on a tour of the Cypress Top Historic Park. They were joined in the Juergen Store by Gene Zaboroski, the last owner of the store. The students who took part are all members of the Social Studies Honor Society and included: Chicheban and Chikanma Ibeh, Carissa Kumar, Lexie Martin, Dania Medina, Meghan Nelson, Jenson von Osinski, Samiksha Ray, Mitchell Schonhoeft. The recorded interviews are available at the Darline Roth Research Library.

Kroger Community Rewards Program

by Becky Martin

The Kroger Community Rewards Program has donated an additional \$56.93 to the Historical Society. The donation reflects a percentage of purchases made at Kroger by members during the last 3 months. If you have not already done so, we urge you to register your loyalty card online. Every time you shop and swipe your card at check out, CHS earns a donation. The more you shop, the more we earn! It is a great way to support CHS by just shopping as you would normally. Visit www.kroger.com, click on the ‘Community Rewards’ section and follow the prompts. Enter Cypress Historical Society or our NPO number....41564 and click ‘Save’. Any transactions made using the card number associated with this account will now be applied to the program.



It’s Not Too Late to Add To the CHS Cookbook!

The CHS Cookbook Committee is assembling and typing up the almost 200 recipes submitted! But, they’ve said they will still take more if you have a favorite that you want to send in. Drop them off, or send them to the CHS Library, or contact committee chairman Levern Smith directly.

CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY - 2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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CHS Library News

by Jim Sigmund

- Frank & Barbara Litt came down from Forth Worth for our Tin Hall event, and brought an amazing collection of Rumpel and Neal family memories, including his grandmother's (Hannah Rumpel Neal Buchman) diaries from the 50's, the 1939 Cy-Fair HS Yearbook (which we did not have), Neal family photo albums, and Hannah's photos from the early 1900's (which are priceless!). Frank also wrote down his memories of Tin Hall, and stories of growing up in Cypress, which are just as priceless as Hannah's photos!
- In 2014, we were visited by "Token" collector John Byars of Cypress, who showed us a picture of a token put out by E.F. Juergen. John also collects Dun and Bradstreet business directories which date back to the 1870's, and are rare today. I called John and asked about these directories, and he brought in his entire collection for us to scan! The yearly books give the names of the businesses that were in each town. We are compiling this information to build a timeline back into the 1800's.
- I scanned Jane Ledbetter's family book that had a lifetime's worth of accumulated history. Jane is one of those who is "related to everyone", so her book contains photos and info from many Cypress area families, including Krahn, Zahn, Froehlich, Juergen, and Dolen.
- At our Tin Hall event, W.L. Bane donated a framed picture of Leon "Pappy" Selph and The Blue Ridge Playboys playing at Tin Hall in 1983. After an early start playing violin for Bob Wills, Pappy started his own band in the 1930's. He was also a long-time member of the Houston Fire Department. In 1995, he was inducted into the Western Swing Hall of Fame.

THANKS TO OUR APR-JUN BENEFACTORS!

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You Want Your Beer Cold? What Kind of German Are You?!

by Jim Sigmund

There's nothing like a cold beer on a hot Houston afternoon, but it wasn't always as easy as a trip to the refrigerator. I was reminded of this recently while studying a scan of an original post card photo brought to us by Frank Litt. The 1907 street view of Cypress showed a small building on the south side of the tracks, about where Spring-Cypress intersects Hempstead Hwy today. Previous scans of this photo did not allow us to read what was written on the building, but now you can see that it said "Houston Ice & Brewing Co., E.F. Juergen". Commercial ice production only began in the late 1870's, and Hugh Hamilton began producing both ice and cold beer in 1887 with his Houston Ice & Brewing Company. Juergen store invoices told us that E.F. Juergen was Hamilton's regular customer, but this picture would suggest that he operated a satellite location for Houston Ice & Brewing, probably cold storage for ice, beer, and other perishable goods. A Cypress location could serve northwest Harris County and any points along the railroad.



This is a great example of the detail that can be seen by scanning an original photo at high resolution, and studying the objects in the picture. (Photo from Frank Litt)

The "Cold Drinks" sign that hung on the Juergen Store was more than just casual advertising.

Cypress Historical Society
P.O. Box 2963
Cypress, Texas 77410

CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2017 MEMBERSHIP FORM

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Questions? Please contact Jane Ledbetter at 281-758-0083
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