



# CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 2008

Issue 37

March, 2018

## President's Column

*by Jim Sigmund*

We tend to think of history as something that happened 50 or 100 years ago. But when I think back to when the Cypress Historical Society was first started in 2008, there is a lot that has happened in these past ten years. Most of you have been on this journey with us to discover and preserve the history of the Cypress and Fairbanks area, but our membership continues to grow with new people as families move to northwest Harris County and want to learn about the area's rich history.

There would not be a Cypress Historical Society or Cypress Top Park without the vision and generosity of Gene and Delphine Zaboroski who worked with Precinct 3 County Commissioner Steve Radack to set aside 2.65 acres to preserve the buildings and site of old Cypress. A group of volunteers worked with Precinct 3's Fred Collins and Linda Martin-Rust to set up the Park buildings and research the area's history. It was from this original group of volunteers that the Cypress Historical Society was formed in the Spring of 2008. The first Board of Directors were Diane Neff-President, Darline Roth, Vice-President, Helen Callender-Secretary, Jim Sigmund-Treasurer, Joyce Kleb, Jane Ledbetter, and Scott Kiester. Major projects included collecting information



***The construction of our own building by Harris County Precinct 3 Steve Radack in 2012 took CHS to a new level.***

## **"CHS 10-Year Celebration!"**

***Event for CHS members and their Families***

**When: Saturday, April 21st**

**Time: 11am – 3pm**

**Where: Inside Juergen Hall**

## **Cypress Historical Society to Celebrate their 10-Year Anniversary**

*by Mary Bianche*

Wow! It's hard to believe 10 years have gone by since Cypress Historical Society beginnings. We are having a special 10th Anniversary Celebration for our Members and their family and guests. This year's event will be on Saturday, April 21, 2018, from 11:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m.

Entertainment will include Square Dancing, including its history and a short demonstration. Of course, you all know our events include delicious food, great conversation, lots of visiting, and door prizes. For this special occasion, we will be furnishing ham, bread, drinks, and we request each family bring one of your favorites: a vegetable, salad (fruit or green), or dessert. We'll be expecting to see you there!

and photos for the Family Plaques in Juergen Hall, and adding to the 250+ genealogies that Darline Roth had started 20 years earlier. Early CHS meetings were held at Kleb Woods, and then in the upstairs of the Sigmund house! This changed in 2012 when then President Terri Sigmund and a Business Advisory Committee petitioned Steve Radack to build CHS it's own building in the Cypress Top Park. We moved into our new building on May 19, 2012. In June of 2013, CHS worked with Fred Collins and the Harris County Historic Commission to install a Historical Marker for the community of Cypress. Since 2010, CHS has published an annual calendar, ran five Old-Fashioned Picnics, and hosted numerous Member events including those on Ranching, Dairying, the Cy-Fair Volunteer Fire Department, Hot Wells, Tin Hall, Civil War Relics, and the H&TC Railroad.

But, among all the accomplishments of CHS over the years, I believe the greatest has been to bring together old friends, and share the memories of growing up in this area. We cannot discover and preserve this history without the help of those of you who lived it! Thanks to all of you that have made this a great 10 years!



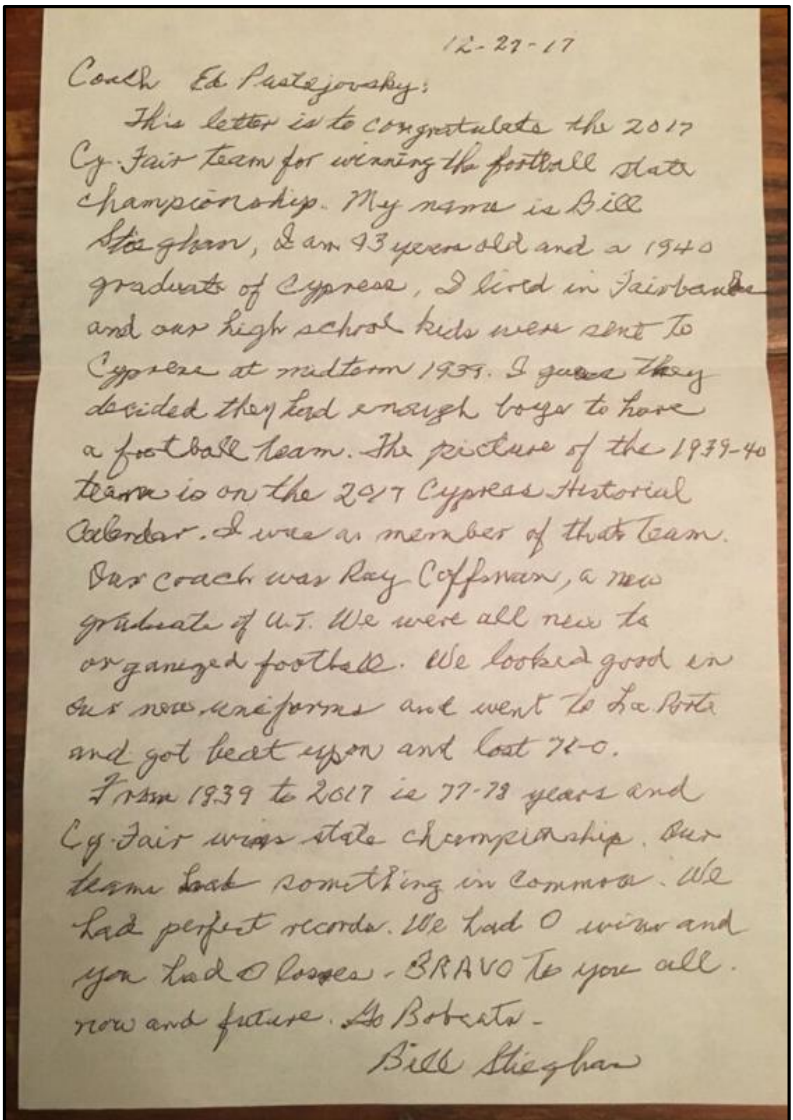
## Cy-Fair Football Makes History!

by Jim Sigmund

Cy-Fair High School Football team won it's first ever State Championship on December 23, 2017, and became the Class 6A Division II Champions! We congratulate the players and coaches on this great achievement. Cy-Fair alumni beam with pride everywhere, but none so much as CHS member Bill Stieghan (Class of '40) in Midland, Texas. You see, Bill was on the first Cy-Fair football team in 1939-40. He decided to write a note of congratulation to the coach. The note was circulated to Cy-Fair HS teachers, and Coach Pustejovsky sent a State Champs T-Shirt and Medallion to Bill in return! BFND!



Bill Stieghan on the 1939-40 Cypress High School Football Team. You can see the entire team in the CHS 2017 Calendar (month of September)!



Bill Stieghan's letter to Coach Ed Pustejovsky.

### Cypress Historical Society

P.O. Box 2963

Cypress, Texas 77410

E-Mail: [cypresshistsociety@att.net](mailto:cypresshistsociety@att.net)

Darline Roth Research Library: 281-758-0083

Hours: Tue, Wed, Thur 9 - 4, & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat 11 - 2

### CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY - 2017-2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## Zahn Cemetery Restoration

by Jay Gavitt

In our last newsletter, we told you how CHS teamed up with the Cy-Fair Council for Social Studies teachers to do a service project. They began to clean-up the Zahn Family Cemetery, which was damaged by recent flooding.

The final stage of the restoration was coordinated by Nate Jeffcoat for his Eagle Scout project. Nate is from Troop 44 in Ravensway. Jeff first met with members of CHS and toured the cemetery. They then evaluated what needed to still be done. Jeff created a plan to clear the remaining growth, and repair the fences of the Zahn Cemetery. The final project involved over 30 people on Saturday, January 20, 2018. They arrived in a caravan of five trucks filled with equipment, supplies, and refreshments. The group included Jeff's parents, grandparents, sibling, family friends, scout leader, CHS members, and Conrad Zahn, Jr. They completed the clearing of the cemetery and surrounding areas. They restored the fencing around the cemetery that had been destroyed by the flooding of Little Cypress Creek. This involved setting new posts and reconnecting the chain-link fencing. Jeff provided breakfast and lunch for all who worked that day. Early in the afternoon, the restoration of the Zahn Cemetery was complete.

This was a true community effort that included the Cypress Historical Society along with district teachers, students, area residents, scouts and families. After completing the project, Mr. Zahn commented that "the cemetery looks better now than it ever has."

If you have family in a local cemetery that needs attention, let us know. CHS can help by coordinating local groups that want to help.



**Nate Jeffcoat and his team of volunteers including family, friends, and fellow Scouts from Troop 44.**



**Re-installing the perimeter fence for the Zahn cemetery was a major task for Nate's crew.**



**The finished product speaks for itself! Great job, Nate.**

### Mark Your Calendars!

#### Mar 17 – CHS Board Mtg

*(All Members welcome)*

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

#### Apr 21 – CHS 10-YR Celebration!

*(Members & their Families welcome)*

Saturday, 11:00am-3:00pm

*"Food, Fun, & Fellowship!"*

Juergen Hall, Cypress Top Historic Park

#### May 19 – CHS Board Mtg

*(All Members welcome)*

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

## **O.C. "Preacher" O'Quinn**

by Jim Sigmund

We love to hear about Cypress folks who made a difference in this world. Ben Ledbetter told me about Preacher O'Quinn, who was inducted into the Texas Horse Racing Hall of Fame this past October. Ben drove the school bus back in 1968 and would stop by the O'Quinn's to pick up their daughter, Debbie. Their ranch was on the northeast corner of Hempstead Rd and FM 1960, where the CubeSmart Self Storage is today (it used to be the Builder's Square store, for those who can remember that!). Below is an excerpt from an article published by the Freestone County "The Times". You can read the full article at: <http://freestonecountytimesonline.com/horse-breeder-inducted-into-texas-horse-racing-hall-of-fame/>

FREESTONE COUNTY "THE TIMES" - NOVEMBER 24, 2017

### **HORSE BREEDER INDUCTED INTO TEXAS HORSE RACING HALL OF FAME**

*The Horse Racing world gathered at Retama Park Racetrack in San Antonio to celebrate the Texas Horse Racing Hall of Fame's newest inductees on October 21, 2017. Among those honored was lifelong pioneer Quarter Horse and Thoroughbred breeder, O.C. "Preacher" O'Quinn. Proudly accepting the award, on O'Quinn's behalf, were his children, Dr. Bob O'Quinn, Danny O'Quinn, and Debbie O'Quinn Eubanks.*

*Preacher O'Quinn, originally from Louisiana, worked as a roughneck and got the nickname from his co-workers because he never cursed, smoked, or drank and was known to be a very moral and stern man. After moving to the Houston area, Preacher devoted his life to his horses and raised many great runners. He was in the horse business before the American Quarter Horse Association was formed in 1940; and owned the second horse ever registered with the association, prominent sire, Rialto. Some of the runners' sires include the great King, Three Bars, Depth Charge, Go Man Go and Easy Jet. His runners included the multi-record setting, AQHA 1953 World Champion; two-year-old colt, Super Charge; and the great Miss Bar Leo that set the mare world record, two-year-old filly record at 350 yards, two-year-old-filly record at 300 yards and equaled the world record, the mare record and the filly record at 350 yards.*

*Preacher was one of the first breeders to achieve success crossing his Quarter Horse mares with Thoroughbreds, and he was relentless in pursuing the best sires. His horses were fast, beautiful and versatile. This Quarter Horse versatility showed itself, when England's Prince Phillip acquired a filly as his polo pony. Preacher was greatly loved by the horse community. His greatest desire was to be friends with everyone, and to show others that there were honest people in the horse business.*

*Preacher was renowned for his humility. Herbert, his grandson, remembers how his grandfather worked at a gas station for a dollar a day during the depression and always said, "I was one of the lucky ones, because I had a job." He was an eternal optimist that never feared work. He was recognized as the Texas Racing Board's Owner of the Year in 1976. And, in 2001, he posthumously received the Fifty Year Breeder's Award from the American Quarter Horse Association. Preacher passed away in 2000, at the age of 91.*



O.C. "Preacher" O'Quinn (on right)

### **Spring Cleaning?**

It's that time of year to pull old boxes out of the closet, and wonder why you've been saving this stuff for so long! We love our memories of the past, but they are so much better when we can share them with others. If you have old school papers and photographs from the Cypress or Fairbanks area, bring them by the CHS Library. You can donate them, and they will become available to others, and you will be contributing to the preservation of our local history. Or, you can have us scan them and we will return the originals for you to keep in your family. We can provide a digital copy of your memories that can be easily shared with family that are far away, and with the younger generations who will look at it on their phones and iPads.

We are also interested in small artifacts from this area that we can display in the Library cases or use in our educational programs. Our space is limited, so we cannot accept large items, but we can also check with Fred Collins to see if they would be interested in displaying the larger artifacts in one of the Cypress Top Historic Park buildings.

## Library News

by Jim Sigmund

The CHS Library is a busy place these days as volunteers work on genealogy, indexing records, researching history topics, and all the other administrative duties we handle. If you would like to help, stop by, and we can find something that matches your interests and talents. We also need people to just look through our collections and jot down names of people they can identify. Of course, you are always welcome to just come by and look through our books and photos, and we won't put you to work! Sharing your stories and memories is just as important! Some recent library additions are:

- Ernest Matzke ('57) brought us Cy-Fair HS yearbooks from 1949-52 and several vintage Junior High yearbooks.
- Evelyn Ramey ('55) donated the 1947 CFHS Yearbook in honor of Ernestine Matzke. Our collection of Yearbooks is growing, but we still need the following: Cy-Fair HS - 1963, 1964, 1966, 1969, and any from the '70's. Also, we only have one Tomball HS Cougar (1943).
- Don Morris has been by the CHS Library continuing work on his George F. Baker ancestors. George was a butcher and rancher and owned land along the San Felipe Trail on the south side of Buffalo Bayou in the earliest days of Houston. This land became valuable as Houston grew, and later his family moved their ranching to Cypress, south of Spring-Cypress Rd, near the Post Office and into the Coles Crossing area. Don showed us a book called "Pleasant Bend: Upper Buffalo Bayou and the San Felipe Trail in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century" by Dan Worrall (2016). It has incredible detail of the area heading west from Houston, all the way out to the Spring Branch and Addicks/Bear Creek communities. It has the first photos we've seen of the old Bear Creek Gun Club Dance Hall! CHS has purchased a copy for our library if you are interested in reading more about this area.
- Don Stieghan (Class '48) sent us two priceless photos. One was from the 1939 Fairbanks Elementary May Fete, where Don represented the 1<sup>st</sup> Grade! The other was of the 1939 Fairbanks Rhythm Band (below). Don knew some names, but we are working to identify the others.

### **THANKS TO OUR JAN-MAR BENEFACTORS!**

#### **Donations:**

John & Virginia Alamanza  
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#### **Scholarship:**

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Mary Airola Smith  
Austin J. Smith

#### **Lifetime Membership:**

Ernest Matzke  
Austin J. Smith



**A portion of the Fairbanks 1939 Rhythm Band photo from Don Stieghan. The full photo can be seen at the CHS Library, and we need help to get all the names recorded. The children are precious!**

### **"Big Cypress Gets Bigger" added to CHS Library**

by Jay Gavitt

CHS has obtained a copy of "Big Cypress Gets Bigger". This project was completed by Danielle Johnson-Hazelwood. Danielle, a graduate of Cy-Woods HS, is a graduate student attending the University of Houston. She worked with many of the Cypress Historical Society staff and resources. Danielle also used various government agencies and subdivisions information for her research. The project centered on the growth of the Cypress area. She researched how the Cypress area has been impacted by the rapid growth in northwest Harris County. The result of her project was a wonderfully written report accompanied by a visual presentation. Both of these describe the growth in Cypress from early settlement to the present. Copies of the report and visual presentation are available at the Cypress Historical Society.

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

CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2018 MEMBERSHIP FORM

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
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LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

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ADDITIONAL DONATION (CHS is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corp)

General Fund \_\_\_\_\_ Scholarship Fund \_\_\_\_\_

Make check to: Cypress Historical Society

Mail to: CHS Membership, P.O. Box 2963, Cypress, TX 77410

Questions? Please contact Jane Ledbetter at 281-758-0083  
[www.cypresshistoricalsociety.com](http://www.cypresshistoricalsociety.com)

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