



CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ESTABLISHED 2008

Issue 58

CYPRESS, TEXAS

SEPTEMBER 2023

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - MICHELLE CHRISTIE

Hope everyone is staying cool, and looking forward to fall weather soon.

Jim Sigmund, after many years of dedicated service has stepped back as editor of the newsletter, sincere thanks for all he has done.

I would like to introduce Leslie Price, she will be the new editor of the newsletter, if you have any ideas, stories, or suggestions you would like to share please feel free to email her at news@cypresshistoricalsociety.com. We are currently open on Tuesday from 9am-12pm and 1pm-4pm, Thursday 9am-12pm and Friday 9am-12pm with several new volunteers.

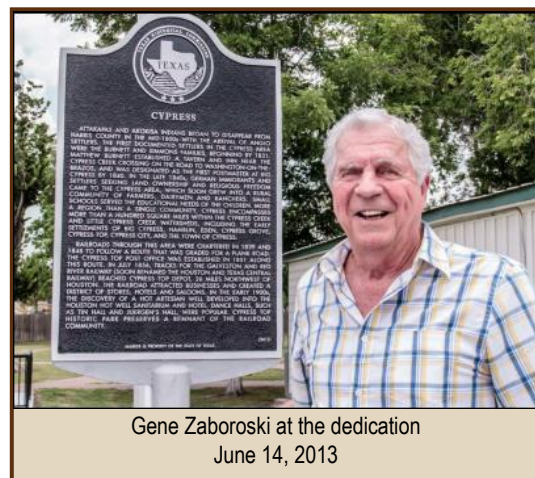
CYPRESS HISTORICAL MARKER - 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

It was 10 years ago that members of CHS celebrated a major achievement - dedication of the Texas Historical Marker at Cypress Top Historic Park. The marker commemorates the proud history of the town and area of Cypress; the effort to get that marker spanned three years - from September 2010 to the dedication ceremony June 14, 2013.

Getting an official historical marker was no easy feat, requiring extensive forms and piles of supporting documentation to be submitted, and sponsorship support gained from the Harris County Historical Commission. CHS and the County then worked together to gain approval from the State Historical Commission.



Marker and Flag as they looked on Dedication Day



Gene Zaboroski at the dedication
June 14, 2013

The library has a very thick binder (available for your persusal) documenting all of the work that Trevia Wooster Beverly and Jim Sigmund put in to making this happen. As mentioned in our June 2013 newsletter, these two were aided in this effort by Fred Collins, Jane Ledbetter, and Darline Roth.

In the July 2013 issue of Cy-Fair Lifestyles Magazine, former CHS President Jane Ledbetter succinctly described the marker's objective:

This marker recognizes the area known as Cypress for its role in the settling and growth of this part of Texas. It includes not only the "town" of Cypress, but the "region" of Cypress which encompasses over a hundred square miles within the Cypress Creek and Little Cypress Creek watersheds. Cypress began as a pre-Republic settlement and has become one of the Houston area's largest and fastest growing suburban areas.

We're so pleased that CHS played the lead role in getting official state recognition of the significance of the Cypress area. Thanks to all those who worked so hard to make it happen!

THESE SEEDLINGS CAME TO LEARN

On Tuesday, June 20, we were honored to host 22 students aged 5-11 from The Seedlings Montessori School Teachers Sara Simball and Tina Nguyen and the children spent their morning and lunchtime with us, learning a bit of history about the area in which they live, and imagining the lives of those who lived here in the past.

The day started with a short discussion and demonstration of items in the museum - they loved the chicken catcher! The children were given time to independently explore the museum collection, and taken on a tour of the gas station, the general store, and the saloon.



Seedlings Montessori School students and their teachers



Seedlings students learning from CHS President Michelle Christie

In the museum, they noted the familiarity of the toys. Kids in the past liked the same things as kids do now - dolls, trains, chickens - even if the old doll struck a few of them as a bit creepy!

In the gas station, they saw the old farm trucks, and learned that The General Store, with items from old to new[ish], had something to fascinate everyone. They all loved the chance to "sit at the

bar" in the saloon and imagine the festive nightlife in days gone by.

When asked what they would have liked most about living in the old days, farm fresh food and milk was the favorite - but it was lunch time, so perhaps they were all just hungry. By far the least favorite thing would have been the lack of running water!

If you know of a summer camp or school that would like to tour the park, please call to schedule a trip



Seedlings students learning about Wartime Farm Trucks

ROSEHILL SOCIAL CLUB FUNDRAISER

CHS donated a gift basket to the Rosehill Social Club Fundraiser, held on May 21.

Rosehill Social Club is an emergency assistance organization formed in 1997 to help the family of Michael Szymansky, who died unexpectedly after suffering a heart attack. They have continued that tradition of families helping families ever since. Since their founding, they have been able to give over \$2.4 Million to families in need in the Rosehill, Magnolia, Tomball, Waller, and Cypress communities.



Erline Schoenfeldt reports that the Fundraiser overall brought in \$150,000, with the CHS basket bringing \$600 in the live auction.

HOW YOU CAN HELP CHS

- Choose us on Kroger Community Rewards
- Become a Member
- Volunteer with us - we will find a place for your gifts and talents

KSBJ CAME TO CYPRESS TOP PARK WITH FREE ICE CREAM!

The evening of July 17 was HOT as blazes when KSBJ came to Cypress Top Park with free ice cream. CHS was there to show off our museum and library to all the families that came - complete with a "gift shop" staffed by members of our board.

Beverly Richardson stayed VERY busy showing the collected artifacts, telling stories, and sharing the mission of CHS with beautiful families who mostly had no idea the Cypress Top Park was the amazing historical park that it is.

We've already seen an uptick of tour requests, donations, and new volunteers.

InkDots was extremely generous to us - they providing the beautiful signs that will benefit the society for years. We'll be able to use these signs for all the events we have in the future. We're very grateful to them.



Treasurer Becky Martin ready to greet our visitors

LIBRARY & MUSEUM UPDATE

BILLIE STIEGHAN'S WW2-ERA BASEBALL TROPHY & GEAR



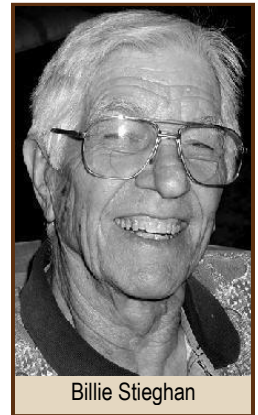
Billie Stieghan's Baseball Trophy

The family of Billie Stieghan made a donation of his baseball glove, ball, and WW2-era trophy. Mr. Steighan was a 1940 alumni of Cy-Fair High School, and a member of CHS until his passing in January 2021, at the age of 96.

He served in the Army during WW2, stationed at the Reception Center at Dodd Army Field at Fort Sam Houston [in San Antonio]. He was always an avid baseball player, and played for the Army.

He pitched a no-hit, no-run game for the War Department Personnel Center Officers to win that trophy in 1943.

Back in March of 2016 Mr. Steighan spoke with Jim Sigmund and Jane Ledbetter, reminiscing of his time growing up on the family property on Hempstead and Clay Road. We appreciate the family's generosity in adding these items to our collection



Billie Stieghan

CY-FAIR ISD BAND ALBUM

Linda Urban Lehmann stopped by the Library and Museum to donate a record album of the Cy-Fair ISD bands.

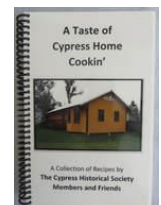
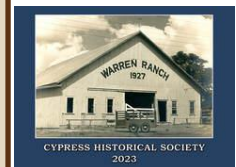


Cy-Fair ISD Band 1966

The album contains music from Cy-Fair High School Band, Dean Junior High School Band, and Arnold Junior High School Band from 1966. While she was with us at CHS, Mrs. Lehmann reminisced about her time at Cy-Fair High - stories to come in future Newsletter issues.

ITEMS FOR SALE

- T-shirts \$10
- Hats \$10
- Polo shirts \$20
- Calendars \$10
- Cookbook \$20
- Civil War Lead \$5
- Postcards \$1
- Memberships
Individual \$15/yr
Family \$25/yr



THIRTY-FOUR YEARS BEFORE THE MASSES 55-89; THE SAGA OF CY-FAIR AND CARLOS WATKINS

Pam Watkins, daughter of Carlos Watkins, gave one of her few remaining copies of Mr. Watkins' self-published collection of short stories.

From his 2011 Obituary, he was known to many as Mr. Cy-Fair High School. He was Cy-Fair High School principal, basketball coach, teacher, mentor, and leader. He started out as a coach at Arnold Junior High, transferred over to Cy-Fair High School to take on the basketball team, and eventually worked his way up to principal of that institution.

He served as principal from 1955 to 1989, having a profound impact on several generations of students and their families.

In 1982 the District honored him by naming a new Junior High School after him - and he became an enthusiastic supporter of the Watkins Bulldogs. [It's now named Watkins Middle School]

The book we have is an interesting, educational, and humorous collection of stories from his days in the district and the Cypress area. His perspective as a leader of those institutions, telling tales of both students and faculties, is worth a look. Come see it in the library.



Carlos Watkins

FAMILY HISTORY

FREDERICKA RUMPEL'S STEAMER TRUNK



Fredericka Rumpel

Frank Litt donated a steamer trunk to us in September 2022. That steamer trunk bore witness to the amazing life of Fredericka Warnecke Rumpel, matriarch of the Rumpel/Neal family. Miss Warnecke immigrated from Berlin, with that trunk, in 1879 at the age of 18. Her parents and siblings seem to have not come with her, that story remains unclear. She married Herman Rumpel, he went to work on the railroad, and they settled in Cypress



Fredericka's Trunk

THANKS TO OUR BENEFACTORS & SPONSORS

Donations

- John & Virginia Alamanza
- Janet Hornill
- Robert & Melissa Kleypas
- The Kroger Company
- Linda Lehmann
- St. Maximilian Kolbe Catholic Church

Scholarship Fund

- LeRoy & Joyce Schlechte
- Mary Airola Smith

Lifetime Membership

- Linda Martin-Rust

Sponsors

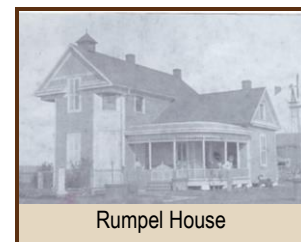
- Minuteman Printing Northwest

Fredericka's brother William immigrated some time in the 1880s and lived with them for a time. One day he became angry at something and shot his sister 5 times. Herman was at work. Fredericka had to rescue herself - walking miles to get help. Her situation was so dire that the news story in the next morning's paper reported her murder - she was not expected to live.

Mrs. Rumpel surprised her doctors and survived, her brother was jailed, and she and Herman went on to have 5 children, only one of whom lived to adulthood [Hannah Rumpel Neal].

That steamer trunk sat silent witness for all of the drama, all of the joy, all of the heartbreak.

We're so pleased to be able to preserve these items. Every item in our collection has a story, recording those stories is one of the most rewarding things we do at CHS.



Rumpel House

AREA HISTORY

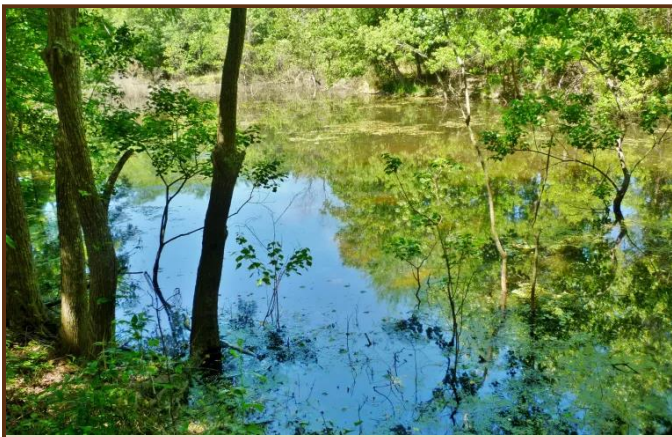
STEP IN TO HISTORY: LITTLE CYPRESS CREEK PRESERVE

Drive North on Telge and instead of turning right on Spring Cypress Rd. turn left into the parking lot at Little Cypress Creek Preserve. Take some water [and bug spray] and wander 2 miles of trails through preserved wetland areas, designed to make you forget about the suburbia just on the other side of the trees.

This 57 acres of County owned land is protected by the Bayou Land Conservancy. Meant to be a haven for our native plants and animals, it's also a rather nice place for humans to get away for a bit. Eventually it will be an educational resource for local residents and visitors.



Little Cypress Creek Preserve entrance



"Wetland" at the Preserve

While there, you might contemplate that what you're seeing is what Cypress looks like "on its own" - so our earliest settlers would have seen THAT wild Cypress rather than the sprawling city we now live in.

Maps and information are available at bayoulandconservancy.org. If you're looking for a handy field guide to the species of flora and fauna out there, they've got that too! Photos to help you identify the birds, butterflies, insects, reptiles, mammals, and plants you might see.

They're also a nice nonprofit to support, they're preserving the bayou lands that our early Cypress settlers called home.

FROM THE EDITOR:

As a new member of CHS and new editor of the Newsletter – I know I have a lot to learn! My goal for this newsletter is to pique your interest in the history of Cypress, entertain, amuse, and inform you. I'm eager for feedback of any kind. How can I make this newsletter better for YOU? Please let me know

Leslie Price, news@cypresshistoricalsociety.com

LET US KNOW ABOUT

- Upcoming reunions
- Social events
- Tour requests
- Presentation requests

Cypress Historical Society

Founded 2008

Our mission is to discover, educate, promote, collect, preserve and make available to the public, historical documents and artifacts of the Cypress area.

Darline Roth
Research Library and Museum
at Cypress Top Historic Park
26026 Hempstead Rd
Cypress, TX 77429-7321
Phone: 281-758-0083

Hours
TUESDAY 9am-4pm
THURSDAY 9am-Noon
FRIDAY 9am-Noon

Board of Directors
President—Michelle Christie
Secretary—Stacie McKay
Treasurer—Becky Martin
Barbara Fisk-Dorr
Celeste Haltom
Beverly Richardson
Erline Schoenfeldt
Levern Smith

Board Meetings
1pm, first Friday every month
all are welcome

Mailing Address
Cypress Historical Society
P.O. Box 2963
Cypress, TX 77410

Website
Cypresshistoricalsociety.com

Newsletter
Editor—Leslie Price
news@cypresshistoricalsociety.com

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



CYPRESSHISTORICALSOCIETY.COM



MEMBERSHIP

\$15/yr individual
\$25/yr family

WHO WE ARE

The Cypress Historical Society [CHS], a 501(c)3 organization, was founded in March 2008.

Our mission is to make the rich, colorful history of the Cypress area known to the current residents of Cypress and the public in general

WHAT WE DO

We preserve local artifacts, conduct genealogical research of the settling families, assist the public with their own family history research, offer history presentations, assist the County with tours of Cypress Top Park, and more.