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East Texas News and Events

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EAST TEXAS NEWS AND NOTES

Hurricane Ike roared through the Gulf Coast and East Texas in September, creating havoc and leaving much destruction in its wake. The Galveston-Port Bolivar-Golden Triangle region was particularly hard hit. Our Gulf Coast friends are a hardy lot who understand much about surviving and recovering from such natural tropical systems – Galvestonians are a particularly strong-willed group of people who are no doubt determined to rebuild their island city to even greater grandeur – but all could still use help and support, be it in the form of labor, financial consideration, and prayer. While Association members share our hope of restoration with all of the stricken residents, we are no doubt particularly worried about the condition of historical structures, monuments, and places. We ask members who can to contact the local historical societies in the region and volunteer any help in preserving and maintaining such sites. If history proves anything (and we think that it does), the Gulf Coast will be back; all we need to do is observe the examples of restoration after Rita, Alicia, Celia, Carla, Audrey, and the great storms of 1915 and 1900. Texans are resilient and resourceful. We will not only rebuild and restore, but we will learn from such powerful forces of Mother Nature on how to protect both our environment and our people.

The East Texas Historical Association is proud to announce the selection of our new secretary, Ms. Deanna Smith. Ms. Smith is a native East Texan from Nacogdoches and was previously a commercial teller at BancorpSouth. She is quickly becoming familiar with her new position and is doing a fantastic job.

Despite hurricanes, downed trees, and the stress of power outages, East Texas Historical Association members gathered in Nacogdoches at The Fredonia Hotel on September 25-27 for our annual fall meeting. “Bad old Ike” and his aftermath understandably kept some from attending, but we still enjoyed a lively, informative, and entertaining get-together. Program Chair and new Association President Ted Lawe and his program committee (Ken Howell, Caroline Crimm, Miguel Juarez, Gail Beil, Bruce Glasrud, Jim Lovett, and Marshall Schott) assembled a very strong line-up of sessions. In fact, the 2008 fall meeting set a record for the largest number of participants in Association history. Sessions included a roundtable on East Texas’ significance as a borderland region, a discussion on Texas preachers, the debate concerning the Sutton-Taylor feud, East Texas Tejano history, race relations in the twentieth century, and group discussion on African American civil rights in Huntsville. The meeting also continued the Association’s commitment to joint sessions with our fellow regional historical cousins with presentations from the Texas Folklore Society, the West Texas Historical Association, and our good friends from the South Texas Historical Association.

During the Friday evening banquet, the Association honored our departing secretary Portia Gordon. Almost all of you share our affection and reverence for Mrs. Gordon for all she has given to the Association. We can never hope to repay or honor Portia enough for what she has done for the Association, but the

members made an attempt and presented Portia with a gift during the Friday festivities. Portia made me promise to include her thank you to all:

A NOTE OF THANKS:

The East Texas Historical Association has been a major part of my life for the past thirteen years. The Association has some really special members and I want to thank you for the wonderful expression of appreciation shown to me – the Apple laptop and printer. I will have fond memories of my “historical family” for many years and there is no better way than to get my address list up to date on my new computer.

My Love To All,
Portia L. Gordon

In conjunction with the fall meeting, the Association hosted our annual Max and Georgiana Lale Lecture Series at the Grand Ballroom in the Stephen F. Austin State University Baker Patillo Student Center. Our lecturer for 2008 was Don Graham, the J. Frank Dobie Regents Professor of American and English Literature at the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Graham delivered a well-received talk to a full house titled, “Tex Messaging: A Visual History of Lone Star Cinema.” He regaled his audience with his unique take on Texas and Texans in film. We thank Dr. Graham for his energetic presentation as well as his intellectual contribution.

During the Saturday Luncheon/Business meeting the Association approved a new slate of officers for the Association. Ted Lawe of Dallas is the new Association President, Deanna Smith fills the office of Secretary/Treasurer, Milton Jordan of Georgetown takes over as our First Vice-President, and James Smallwood takes the reins in the Second Vice President’s office. Members also approved the appointment of three new board members: Cynthia Devlin of Zavalla, Bruce Glasrud of Seguin, and Mary Kelley of Beaumont.

The Association also gave out awards during the Saturday Luncheon. The C.K. Chamberlin Award for the Best Article in the *East Texas Historical Journal* for the last calendar year went to Dr. Steven Boyd, Professor of History at the University of Texas at San Antonio, and David K. Smith, who is a graduate student at UTSA, for their article, “Thomas Hickey, The Rebel, and Civil Liberties in Wartime Texas,” Vol. XLV, No. 1 2007. Judith Falls of Cooper, TX was honored as the Ottis Lock Educator of the Year. Lauran Kerr of Houston, TX and Merry Ressler of Commerce, TX received research grants from the Ottis Lock Endowment, and James Smallwood’s book *The Feud That Wasn’t* captured the Ottis Lock prize for Best Book on East Texas History. Past President Dan Utley was the recipient of the Best of East Texas Award. We extend a hearty congratulations to all the award winners

On the subject of meetings, we hope that all members are making plans to attend our annual spring meeting on February 19-21, 2009. We will gather in a new locale as we make our first ever trek to Paris/Clarksville in Northeast Texas. We will headquarter at the Holiday Inn in Paris, but this year’s meeting will be a unique experience for the Association since we will be “mobile.” We will hold our Friday morning sessions in Paris at the Holiday Inn. After we

break for a self-planned lunch, we will convene once again on Friday afternoon in Clarksville. Judge Jim Lovett of Clarksville has planned a great experience for us that afternoon – a guided tour of historic Clarksville. The traditional Friday evening banquet will follow the tour and we will then return to Paris for our Saturday sessions and luncheon. The spring meeting is shaping up to be one of our most original and enjoyable gatherings and we hope all will attend. You can register for the meeting on line at our website: easttexashistorical.org.

Stephen F. Austin State University announces the establishment of their Center for Regional Heritage Research. George Avery will direct the Center, which will “blaze a trail that bridges the divide between history, recreation, geography, archaeology, heritage tourism, and interpretation in order to arrive at a destination of improved quality of life and economic development in East Texas.” You can contact the Center for Regional Heritage and Research at averyg@sfasu.edu.

The West Texas Historical Association will hold its annual meeting on April 2-4 in Lubbock, TX. Tai Kreidler, Monte Monroe, and the rest of the folks at WTHA always stage an informative and entertaining meeting. For registration and lodging information, contact the West Texas Historical Association at: West Texas Historical Association, Texas Tech University, Box 41041, Lubbock TX, 79409-1041; or via email to wthayb@ttu.edu. Phone inquiries can be made to 806-742-9076.

The History Center at Diboll continues to announce new and exciting collections and access for those who research and chronicle East Texas history. Executive Director Jonathan Gerland and his staff are proud to announce new capabilities of its website, including the addition of research finding guides and oral history transcripts. The finding guides can be viewed at <http://www.thehistorycenteronline.com/findingguides.php> and the oral history transcripts are found at <http://www.thehistorycenteronline.com/oralhisttranscripts.php>, or they both can be accessed through the Research section of the home page, www.TheHistoryCenterOnline.com. They also report a new online exhibit that features a complete transcription of a World War II B-24 nose gunner's flight log and guidelines to teach the exhibit utilizing Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state's curriculum benchmarks. The exhibit can be found under the Online Exhibits section of the site, or directly at <http://www.thehistorycenteronline.com/exhib-descript.php?id=25>. The new additions are in the implementation stages and complete availability may depend on the progress of the project, but Mr. Gerland and his capable staff are hard at work on bringing this to full completion. For those who have not taken advantage of The History Center's holdings and other materials, it is a truly remarkable resource for East Texas historians.

With the high cost of fuel and everything else, we are all looking for enjoyable ways to spend a beautiful East Texas day. A fine outing for all would be a visit to the A.C. McMillan African American Museum in Emory, TX. Curator/Historian (and all around “jack of all trades”) Ted Lawe will welcome all with open arms and would delight in showing you around his exceptional

museum. The McMillan Museum, named for long-time Emory African American educator A.C. McMillan, is a dazzling array of historical artifacts and memorabilia, with a particular emphasis on the portrayal of African Americans in popular culture through the years. The museum is open on Thursday-Saturday from 10:00-5:00. It is located in downtown Emory.

The Texas State Historical Association (TSHA) board of directors approved the move of TSHA from Austin to Denton at its annual meeting in Corpus Christi in March 2008. TSHA also changed the structure of its leadership; it will now have two different positions, administrative and scholarly. The new chief operating executive of TSHA is executive director J. Kent Calder and the Chief Historian is ETHA member and long-time UNT faculty member Randolph "Mike" Campbell. We offer both Kent and Mike our congratulations and support in their new roles.

The Texas State Historical Association will hold its 113th annual meeting in Austin on March 26-28, 2009 at the Palmer Events Center. Three nearby hotels will have special rates for TSHA members and there will be a shuttle service running between the Palmer and the hotels for attendees. You can access more information on the meeting, including hotel reservations, at <http://www.tshaonline.org/about/meeting/>.

The TSHA staff certainly plans ahead. They have issued a call for papers for the 2010 meeting in Dallas, to be held on March 4-6, 2010. The program committee strongly encourages proposals for complete sessions, which should consist of a chair and three paper presenters (or two papers and a commentator). In proposals, please include the following information: (1) session title; (2) names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and institutional affiliations (if any) of the participants; and (3) titles of two or three individual papers and a brief (one page or less) summary of each paper. You can access program work sheets at <http://www.tshaonline.org/about/meeting/program.html>. Please complete a work sheet and mail a copy to the program chair: Kenneth Hafertepe, Baylor University, One Bear Place, Unit 97154, Waco, TX 76798 and a copy to Janice Pinney, TSHA P.O. Box 28527, Austin, TX 78755. The preliminary due date for proposals is February 15, 2009 (for consideration by the initial meeting date in March), and the final due date is April 15, 2009. No proposals will be considered after that date.

The ninth annual Battle of San Jacinto Symposium will be on Saturday April 18, 2009, from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., at the Hilton Hotel and Conference Center, University of Houston. Dr. James E. Crisp of North Carolina State University will once again moderate the meeting, his seventh consecutive year in that role. Speakers and topics are still being formulated. Visit the website for additional information: www.friendsofsanjacinto.org. You can also contact Barbara Eaves at beaves1@comcast.net or 713-521-0768.

We encourage all to send information for inclusion in our News and Notes. If you have an item that you wish to appear, please send it to sosebeem@sfasu.edu or East Texas Historical Association, Box 6223, SFA Station, Nacogdoches, TX 75962-6223. For guaranteed inclusion in our fall issue, all materials should be received no later than April 15, 2009.