

The September 6, 2023 meeting of the Burton Heritage Society was held at Bethany Christian Church at 6pm. 12 members and two guests were present.

Present: Charlene Free, Nan & Gene Fuelberg, Gherlaine & Bob Hofmann, Steph Jarvis, Susan Kiel, Barbara Schoemann, Sharon Scott, Alene & Tom Whitesides

The minutes were approved as written (Motion CFree, 2nd TWhitesides).

Barbara gave the treasurer's report: General account \$6,053.78, Chapel restoration \$43,118.79, stagecoach restoration \$1,568.12, Depot pavilion \$2,153.25, Savings \$6,214.41.

Barbara asked the group to consider closing the savings account and moving funds to the chapel restoration account. There was some discussion about options and one note was made by Ned Ross that the group also considered a "specs" account through Fidelity as they are paying 5% for 30 days. An additional note about moving the funds to the chapel account was made that we need to reach the \$50,000 goal for grant matching funds to be sought. A motion was made to move the \$6,214.41 from the savings account to the chapel restoration fund and to close the savings account. It was also agreed to explore other interest-bearing options for the \$50,000 since we are still quite a way from our goal of over \$100,000 for the project. (Motion, TWhitesides, 2nd BSchoenemann).

Old Business: Steph reported that we had finally received an estimate from Gary Ladewig of Ladco Construction for the chapel project. The total has come in at \$125,000. The bid reads as follows: tear off old siding, re-wire electric, insulate with insulation, install outside wall with 1/2 OSB, rap with tough wrap, take out existing windows, build new windows, install new windows, install Hardie board, prep and make ready to paint, caulk/prime/and paint. Also noted is that this is just an estimated price and is subject to change due to increase of material. The group discussed the bid and several comments were made for consideration: We need to talk more with Gary about the inside choices that we would like for the walls such as shiplap (or other choices appropriate for the age of building). Ned noted that they have been working with someone to mill custom cypress pieces for the old Harmel house but that definitely adds to the cost for the project. Charlene expressed interest in trying to save the existing windows and rework them as necessary (rather than rebuild) and volunteered to be part of a group to explore this option. Steph added that she recently spoke with Dennis Wood and he also has experience with reworking old windows in their home and would be interested in looking at the windows. Ned agreed he would be interested in being part of this specific project as well. The group agreed that the choices for "restoration" of the existing building are challenging since so much of the original building has been altered (most noticeably in the 1960s-1970s). The plan is to restore the building to as close as possible to what would have been common for the time the building was built in 1917 for a simple, country church. Along the same topic but from the fundraising aspect, the Mt Zion committee is planning a fundraiser for early November out at the church and to include light food, drinks, live music, and possible "period" atmosphere to the age of the building (1920s). We plan to charge per person or couple for the event and consider other fundraising options for the evening also to raise as much as possible to put towards grant matching funds to really move forward with the remaining work to be done.

New Business: The next event coming up is the National Night Out on Tues, Oct. 3 from 5:30-7:30pm at the Cotton Gin Pavilions. Sign up and donation sheets will go out soon for volunteer needs and hot dog/chips/etc. Donations.

The next event after will be Trick or Treat Trail set Sat. Oct. 28 from 5:30-7:30pm. The trail will follow the same main route as last year (Railroad Street between the Burton Elementary and lower field of the Texas Cotton Gin Museum). This is a great community event and in the four years we have had it so far the attendance has grown from 200 or so to most likely 600 attendees. Sign up sheets for

volunteer spots and candy/sponsor donations will also be going out soon so members were encouraged to keep an eye out for them.

We have set the date for Texas Ranger Day on Sat. March 9, 2024. Tom has begun working on plans for the living history component and is gathering local volunteers (Paul M, Ronnie S, Dave from Bryan) to create a "McNelly's Rangers" group that will do the same things that were offered by the Old West Rangers at the event and added an element of live action, fun and activities that add to the overall success of the event. The group will plan to set up an actual Ranger camp with a tent to depict life on the range for the Rangers. Tom requested that the society purchase some reproduction badges so that all volunteers would wear the same ones. He also plans to have the group work up a few "skits" that are based on Ranger and McNelly history to offer throughout the day. Susan suggested that a separate meeting be held soon and that anyone interested in working with Tom on TRD plans join in. At this point we still have time to think about options and ways to improve the event. Tom will outline more of the questions to consider for the event prior to that meeting. Pastor Bob offered the use of Bethany for upcoming meetings to this end. The last event discussed briefly was the Burton Christmas Market & More set for Sat. Dec. 9th from Noon to 5pm at the Cotton Gin pavilions. Meetings will also begin for this event to discuss the different parts of its planning (kids activities, Santa, caroling, food serving, etc.). The next meeting is set for October 4th at 6pm. Gherlaine and Bob again expressed that any future meetings could be held at Bethany as needed and that with the Fall coming, the outdoor kitchen area would be an especially fun area to utilize. Everyone expressed their thanks for the hospitality of Bethany for today and possible future meetings/events. A motion was made to adjourn (Motion, BSchoenemann, 2nd AWhitesides). Meeting adjourned at 6:50pm.

After the meeting, Gherlaine spoke on the interesting history of the area north of Burton including Union Hill, Blackburn Settlement, McLellan Settlement, Sandtown, Kerr Settlement. She also shared the history of her family and their strong ties to several of these communities and the Bethany Christian Church. She raised many interesting questions about the history and it would be wonderful to explore these topics in more depth at future meetings. Everyone agreed that we should continue with the short history portion for each meeting. Refreshments and fellowship were also enjoyed after the talk and were much appreciated by everyone in attendance.

Respectfully submitted,
Steph Jarvis
On behalf of secretary Brenda Varner