

CHAPTER THREE

Historic preservation is the act of preserving, conserving, and protecting historical resources for posterity. It is the process of identifying and enhancing historical resources that have local, state, or national significance. Historic preservation has many phases that include surveys, evaluation of historical, architectural, and cultural resources in a particular area, the development of planning and legal measures to protect historical resources, identification of funding sources, and design planning for restoration, rehabilitation, maintenance, and possible adaptive uses for historical resources.¹

According to preservationist Patricia Parker in *Guidelines for Local Surveys*, a National Park Service National Register Bulletin, a historic resource is “any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places; which includes artifacts, records, and remains which are related to such a district, site, building, structure, or object.” Therefore a historic property is defined as any district, site, building, structure, or object with significance in American history, architecture, engineering, archeology, and/or culture, and can be

¹ National Trust for Historic Preservation, “What is Historic Preservation?” <http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/faq/careers-and-/what-is-historic.html> (Accessed April 22, 2013).

important to the local community, the state in which it is located, and/or the nation as a whole.²

The Harrison County Historical Resource Survey, as the title suggests, is a project to re-document previously identified significant structures as well as additional representative built and cultural landscape historical resources in Harrison County, Texas. Parker wrote that a survey is a multi-step process of identifying and gathering data on a community's historic resources. Step one is a field survey, which is the physical search for resources within a designated area and the evaluation of their condition. Step two includes background research on each chosen resource. Step three is organizing and presenting the survey data and all the information gathered on each property. The two results of a survey include an inventory that is an organized compilation of information on those properties that are evaluated as significant, and an evaluation identifying properties that meet a defined criterion of history, architectural, archeological, or cultural significance.³ The final survey report is often used to designate local historic zoning districts and to develop National Register nominations.

The most important reason to conduct a survey is for the purpose of identifying a community's historic resources to help the public recognize the importance of their preservation. But many other positive outcomes can be achieved through surveys such as defining the historic character of a community, offering new perspectives on previous

² Anne Derry, H. Ward Jandl, Carol D. Shull, Jan Thorman, ed. Patricia L. Parker, "*Guidelines for Local Surveys*," National Register Bulletin (Washington: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1977), 2.

³ Anne Derry, H. Ward Jandl, Carol D. Shull, Jan Thorman, ed. Patricia L. Parker, "*Guidelines for Local Surveys*," National Register Bulletin, 2.

events, and better answering the broader questions of who, what, when, why, and how. Conducting a survey not only provides a guideline for future preservation but also lists the types of resources available and what types of resources need further research.

The Harrison County Historical Resources Survey was first inspired by a Public History class taken at Stephen F. Austin State University in which a group of students conducted architectural surveys and background research on resources in several historic zoning overlays within Nacogdoches, Texas. These surveys were then deposited on one central website for the purpose of public access. After some preliminary research within Harrison County it became quickly evident that very little research had occurred since the 1970s, and absolutely nothing available online. With a strong desire to give back to the community, a plan was formulated to jump start preservation of historical resources within Harrison County using the process outlined in *Guidelines to Local Surveys*.

Before one can begin a field survey, the researcher must gather all relevant prior research done within the designated area. The first step was to check national and state local listings: the National Register, Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks, and Texas Historical Markers. The first step was to locate all the structures that are listed on the National Register which was accomplished by visiting its website.⁴ These properties include the Arnot House (Marshall), Dial-Williamson House (Nesbitt), Edgemont (Marshall), First United Methodist Church (Marshall), Fry-Barry House (Marshall), Ginocchio Historic District (Marshall), Hagerty House (Marshall), Harrison County

⁴ National Parks Service, *National Register of Historic Places*, "Harrison County, TX." <http://nrhp.focus.nps.gov/natreghome.do>. Accessed February 2, 2012.

Courthouse (Marshall), Hochwald House (Marshall), Locust Grove (Leigh), Marshall Arsenal, CA (Uncertain), Marshall US Post Office (Marshall), Mimosa Hall (Leigh), Old Pierce House-Magnolia Hall (Marshall), Starr House (Marshall), John R. Stinson, also known as the Belle Fry-Gaines Homes (Marshall), James Turner House (Marshall), and the Weisman-Hirsch Home (Marshall). Unfortunately, since these files were not digitized, an email had to be sent requesting hard copies through the mail and many months passed before they arrived, and once they did the files had to be scanned as PDF files to then upload to the website.

The second step was to ascertain which properties had Texas Historical Markers, which was accomplished by visiting the Texas Historical Commission's website for a listing.⁵ This search produced 122 listings, which included homes, businesses, cemeteries, churches, and historical markers of former structures. Because of the large quantity, historic resources were chosen based on their appropriate correlation to the thesis at hand. Once again, because the sources were not digitized, an email was sent to the Texas Historical Commission requesting PDF files for each designated property. Since these files had to be hand copied, it took several weeks before they were acquired.

The third step was to research the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) collections, which is among the largest and most heavily used in the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress. HABS has been administered since 1933 through the combined efforts of the National Park Service, the Library of Congress,

⁵ Texas Historical Commission, *Texas Historic Sites Atlas*, "Harrison County" <http://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/> Accessed February 18, 2012.

and ongoing programs of the National Park Service. This involved the private sector, recording America's built environment in surveys, including drawings, photographs, and written histories for over 38,600 historic structures and sites from around the United States, from Pre-Columbian times to the twentieth century.⁶ This led me to several properties within Harrison County, which included First United Methodist Church in Marshall, the J.B. Henderson home in Woodlawn, and the Andrews-Taylor plantation in Karnack. Fortunately, these files were available digitally on the HABS website.

At the local level, a search resulted in finding two brochures with a list of historical resources that had been created by Max Lale during the 1970s. Max Simmons Lale (1936-1994) was a Lieutenant Colonel artillery officer in World War II, a partner in the Littlejohn and Son Insurance Agency from 1958 to 1961, and the manager of communications and public relations for the operating contractor for the Longhorn Army Ammunition Plant in Marshall from 1961 until he retired in 1975. He was also an editor, journalist, and writer throughout his entire life. He was the editor of *Sapulpa Democratic News* from 1938-1949 in Sapulpa, Oklahoma, a journalist for *Marshall News Messenger* from 1946-1954 in Marshall, Texas, and publisher of the *Greenville Banner* from 1954-1958 in Greenville, Texas. During his lifetime he published many books such as "As It Was In The Beginning," "Marshall Cemetery, Marshall, Texas," Longhorn Army Ammunition Plant," as well as several articles that appeared in the *East Texas Historical Journal*, *Military History of Texas and the Southwest*, and the *Southwestern Historical*

⁶ Library of Congress, *Historic American Buildings Survey*, "Built in America" http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/habs_haer/. Accessed April 25, 2013.

Quarterly. Later in his life he was involved with many historical societies and groups, including a founding member of the East Texas Historical Association in 1962 and president of the Texas State Historical Association from 1991-1992.⁷ Max Lale was an avid promoter of historical preservation throughout Marshall and Harrison County and responsible for overseeing and preparing twenty-one Texas historical marker applications and nine listings on the National Register of Historic Places.⁸ As a result of Max Lale's civic contributions Marshall honored him on October 26, 1982 with a special "Max Lale Day," in which the "Lale Trail," a historic tour, was introduced in his honor and in the memory of his late wife, Georgiana. The "Lale Trail" is a brochure with ninety-three historical resources located within Marshall and accompanied by addresses and a map. Shortly afterwards, a joint effort of the Harrison County Historical Commission and Marshall Convention and Visitor Bureau resulted in the printing of the "Stagecoach Trace-Harrison County" brochure which lists fifty-six historical markers and resources within the county also with addresses and a map.

The "Lale Trail" and "Stagecoach Trace" brochures became the basis of the Harrison County Historical Resources Survey. These brochures list those resources that previous area preservationists had determined to be significant at the local, state, and national levels. By simultaneously searching of National Register nominations, state and local marker designations, and the Historic American Buildings Survey records, the

⁷ Max Lale Papers, The University of Texas Arlington Library Special Collections, <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utarl/00165/ar1-00165.html>. Accessed April 21, 2013

⁸ "A Resolution Honoring the life of Max S. Lale," *East Texas Historical Association*, <http://www.easttexashistorical.org/v3/membership/resolutions/lale.htm>, accessed April 10, 2013.

project provides a definitive cross-reference of preservation in Harrison County through the 1980s. Originally, the plan was to incorporate many more historical resources to broaden the list. Additional possibilities included rural vernacular structures, African-American churches, homes, businesses, industrial sites, and modern resources from each community and rural section of the county. As the project unfolded, it became evident that the survey was much more time consuming than anticipated. So for time's sake, the survey is limited mostly to the structures that Max Lale and others found of interest. Norman Tyler in *Historic Preservation* wrote that preservationists in the United States tended to identify two distinct resources in the twentieth century: important historical figures and their associated landmark structures and government buildings.⁹ This proved to be a true statement for Harrison County as well because the majority of resources chosen were either public buildings or landmark structures associated with important local, state, and national historical figures. In addition, the majority of the resources were located in Marshall with only a few in the surrounding county. As stated in the first chapter, the purpose of this survey was to update properties previously researched and to conduct additional research; therefore the majority of the historical resources form a narrow cross section of chronological, architectural, and social examples.

After conducting the preliminary research, the first step, according *Guidelines for Local Surveys*, of field surveying ensued. This translated into months of driving to each location within Harrison County and photographing every individual historical resource.

⁹ Norman Tyler, Ted J. Ligibel, and Ilene R. Tyler, *Historic Preservation* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009), 11.

These photos were all taken from public roads unless permission was otherwise given by the owners of the establishments. There were a couple of properties, such as the Davidson Memorial Chapel for instance, that were not accessible from the road and permission was not granted, therefore no pictures were taken. The process was invigorating and thoroughly enjoyable yet very time consuming. Several issues quickly became evident: good photographs must be taken during the middle of the day due to lighting issues; one cannot simply tramp through remote areas of Harrison County without a companion at times for safety reasons; and many resources outside of Marshall proved nearly impossible to find because of outdated directions. After nearly four months of getting lost on remote dirt roads, getting chased by dogs, being rained on, running out of gas, getting questioned by local police, and meeting many people who preferred being left alone, the field work was completed. Once the adventurous part was over, the next four months involved editing and cropping the photos on Photoshop then uploading the thousands of photographs onto the web domain.

At the completion of the field work, my official place of residence was re-located to the Harrison County Research Library Archives located on 117 East Bowie, in Marshall, where the next six months was spent conducting tedious and arduous research on each historical resource. But as Theodore Roosevelt so aptly said, “Nothing worth having was ever achieved without effort.”¹⁰ The Harrison County Research Library Archives is a treasure chest of historical artifacts and documents but the organization of it

¹⁰ Amazon.com, <http://www.amazon.com/Nothing-Having-Achieved-Without-lettering/dp/B003CJFED4>. Accessed April 21, 2013.

all leaves much to be desired. While the volunteer assistants were incredibly kind and helpful, the filing system was deplorable. The structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places contained folders of their own and the homes that Lale wrote about for the Texas Historical Markers were fairly easy to locate. For every other historical resource mentioned in the brochures or identified during the field survey, many hours had to be spent going through hundreds of files and boxes that may have been even remotely acquainted with the location or structure. Usually the files and boxes were chosen from the memory of those that worked there. Thank goodness for them! Often the folders were mislabeled and/or duplicated and frequently placed within the wrong boxes and filing cabinets. But once the correct file was located then victory was attained not in just one document, but, in the ten identical copied documents within the same folder. Of special importance were any historic photographs of the resources. Although the archive has a digitized file system containing some of the material within the archives, it rarely proved successful due to the unorganized paper filing system. Thankfully, the wonderful workers are long time residence of Harrison County and therefore contain a wealth of information that tremendously helped the research stage of the survey.

An interesting discovery in the archives was the omission of major historical turning points, events, and issues within the histories that have been compiled over the years by local historians such as race relations and minority groups. But as Richard J. Evans wrote in *In Defense of History*, “The fact that there are historical controversies, moreover, does not mean that there are no definitely ascertainable historical facts....The

gaps in a document, what it does *not* mention, are often just as interesting as what it contains.”¹¹ Although the majority of research took place within the archives, many sources were found online as well such as county deed records, tax appraisal records, and the United States Census from many years found on Ancestry.com. Sanborn maps that were available were linked to each page, because the maps show the original footprint of the resource.

The third step, creation of an inventory of resources, proceeded next. The project resulted in two groups of properties each with their own charts. The first lists the resources that were either on the National Register of Historic Places and/or were Texas Historical Landmarks (Appendix A). The second chart lists all the other properties (Appendix B). After many months of work, it became evident that research on the proposed one hundred and forty locations was too much; therefore, the locations were split according to the criteria stated above and the second group extremely curtailed.¹² The properties on both charts have three things in common, they all have current condition photographs, each property is accompanied by an architectural survey with the current owner listed, and all resources are listed and available on the website. The first group however, includes additional items for each historical resource: National Register

¹¹Richard J. Evans, *In Defense of History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 79.

¹² The original number of properties included all one-hundred and twenty designated Texas Historical Markers located on the Texas Historical Commission Atlas site, as well as eighty-three from Lale’s brochures. The final result is one-hundred and ten; forty-two that are either listed on the National Register or are have a Texas historical landmark designations, and an additional sixty-eight that are significant due to their architecture.

and Texas Historical files, any other surveys conducted in the past such as the Historic American Buildings Survey, and additional research on the original owners, architects, and builders.

The next phase in the inventory process was digitizing the National Register and Texas Historical Marker files from the Library of Congress and the Texas Historical Commission respectively. Since those files were not previously digitized, many months were spent waiting to receive hand copied files from both agencies. Once received by mail, they were scanned for inclusion on the website. The last phase of step three was the arduous task of creating individual web pages for all properties. By far, this was the most tedious and time consuming part of the entire survey. The twenty-first century offers preservationists a plethora of digital outlets to better preserve and present the history of the past. Therefore, one of the main goals of this thesis was to make the completed research available to the public at the conclusion of the survey. Using server space provided by the Center for Regional Heritage Research (CRHR), Stephen F. Austin State University, and the university's web development software, Red Dot, an individual page was created for each historical resource. This was a major trial and error system because this was the first project of this magnitude to be uploaded which caused many problems to occur. After the tragedy of losing a large amount of work and having to re-upload everything and multiple meetings with the computer technology department, work was finally able to continue. Many weeks of uploading began, which was a long process

because the creation of each page involved several steps, all of which had to be repeated for each resource (see Appendix C).

As the web site began to evolve, the only thing remaining was the completion and digitization of each resource's architectural survey. This project used the Texas Historical Commission's one-page survey form which includes type of structure (dwelling, church, factory, etc.), general characteristics (overall shape of plan, number of stories, construction materials), specific features (number of porches, windows, chimneys, dormers), important decorative elements, number of out buildings, descriptions of original and/or present location, and so on. Begun in the field, each property's form was finalized and then scanned before uploading to the website. The completion of the architectural surveys concluded the creation of the online, publically accessible resources which is included on the CRHR's Harrison County page of its "Regional Resources Map for East Texas."¹³ After the completion of this thesis, the survey will remain available to the public and individuals may submit additional photographs and primary sources.

The last step of a historic resources survey, according to the *Guidelines for Local Surveys*, is an evaluation of the survey, what it reveals about the community and why is it necessary. Harrison County is filled all types of historical resources which help tell a more complete narrative of the community; some have been well researched and preserved, while many more have been ignored and neglected. As a result of this survey

¹³ Harrison County Historic Sites Survey: <http://www.sfasu.edu/heritagecenter/4042.asp>.

it is evident the vernacular architecture and cultural landscapes of the poor working class and minority groups have sadly been neglected. Although Harrison County contained an unusually high number of massive plantations and a conglomeration of wealthy men in antebellum Texas, the majority of the population since then has consisted of low-income black and white citizens who farmed the land, built the railroads, operated the downtown shops, and ran the back road general stores. These are the people who need their stories told through the identification and preservation of their homes and shops scattered all over Harrison County. A drive in the backwoods of the county will bring to view one room A-frame homes, “mom and pop” stores, tiny churches, and numerous cemeteries. Future survey work in rural Harrison County could lead to a deeper understanding of twentieth-century small town development as well as the population shift to cities.

Another thing that needs to be examined is the lack of more than one National Register historic district in Harrison County, The Ginocchio Historic District in Marshall. There are many other areas in the county that, with additional surveying, could be shown to have local, state, or national architectural or historical significance. Some of these areas which appear to have retained their integrity include downtown Elysian Fields, downtown Marshall, Wiley College and East Texas Baptist University and their surrounding neighborhoods, and individual streets in Marshall that contain multiple historical locations such as those on Austin and Houston Streets. Hopefully this survey will spark the interest of future students, historians, and preservationists and help Harrison County identify and preserve its past throughout the twenty-first century.

According to George W. McDaniel in his article “At Historic House and Buildings: Connecting Past, Present, and Future,” a public historian’s job is to “strive to connect people with their history and to help them thereby achieve a sense of belonging to a larger community, of belonging to those who came before and to those who will come after.”¹⁴ This is the desired hope of the Harrison County Historical Resource Survey. Although there is still so much more research to be done, this survey is a start in the right direction and suggests areas of future research while providing the public access to previous documentation and current conditions. Information about this survey will be presented to the Harrison County Historical Commission, the Harrison County Research Library Archives, and the Harrison County Historical Museum to encourage public use of the survey.¹⁵

¹⁴George W. McDaniel, “At Historic House and Buildings: Connecting Past, Present, and Future,” in *Public History: Essays from the Field* ed. James Gardner and Peter LaPaglia (Malabar: Krieger Publishing Company, 2003), 233.

¹⁵Already the public has contacted the author to provide more information concerning several properties within the survey.