



NOMINATION FORM
HALF MILE OF HISTORY

RECEIVED
NOV 30 2012
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Section A: Nomination Information

Name of Nominated person, place or event: Mattie Jones

The nominee is being honored for outstanding contributions in the area(s) of (please check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropy
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Government/Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Culture	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Aviation	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention/Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/> Sports
<input type="checkbox"/> Business/Corporate Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> Law	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Oil/Gas	

Section B: Nominator's Information

Name of person making nomination: W. Bryan Campbell

Address: 3100 Williamsburg Cir

City: Tyler State: TX Zip: 75701

Daytime telephone: 903 581-1196 Email: wbc1999@gmail.com

Relationship to nominated individual: None

Nominated Individual's year of birth: 1862 Nominated Individual's year of death: 1944

Section C: Narrative

The narrative section of the application is the most important. It is the primary source of information judges use to make their selection of new inductees. The two-page narrative submittal must utilize size 12 Times New Roman font and be double spaced. Please include a recommended 25-30 word marker caption at the end of the narrative. Any additional material will be referred to only for verification of accuracy of the nomination. No submitted materials will be returned.

The narrative section must contain an explanation of the nominee's enduring contribution that make this person/place/event worthy of the honor. Please describe the impact the nominee has had on the community, county, region, nation and/or world. For Individuals, please include any honors earned by the nominee as well as a list of organizations in which the nominee has been involved. Also, please indicate their educational background as well as the length of time the individual has lived in Smith County. Inclusion of photos is preferred but optional. Do not send original photos. All submitted materials will become property of the City of Tyler and its Historical Preservation Board.

Please submit nominations to:
City of Tyler Historical Preservation Board
Attention: Half Mile of History
P.O. Box 2039
Tyler, Texas 75710

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Miss Mattie L. Jones was a pioneer Tyler teacher and civic worker. For many years "Miss Mattie," as she was familiarly known to her students, taught English and public speaking in Tyler High School. She always wrote her age as 25+ and took great interest in her pupils she taught. Few students failed classes for she always arranged to give individual assistance to children who needed special help. According to one report, she often could be found lecturing on more "practical matters," such as how to treat a common cold, manners, posture, and what to do if becoming lost in a big city. Each of her students were required to memorize the Ten Commandments. She retired in 1936, having completed forty-one years as a public school teacher.

In addition to her involvement in education, Miss Jones contributed to the civic development of Tyler. For twenty-two years she was a member of the Carnegie Library Board and organized the popular Tuesday Reading Club in 1923. She was the first and only woman member of the Tyler Chamber of Commerce for a number of years. She was a life member of Parent Teachers Organization and belonged to the Congress of Mothers and the Texas State Teachers Association. Miss Jones died in 1944.

In 1955, TISD announced that it would build an elementary school in Miss Jones' honor. Mattie Jones Elementary was originally located at 2521 W. Front Street in Tyler, Texas. Completed in 1956, an honor award was given for its architectural design.

November 16, 1862 - August 9, 1944
Buried in Oakwood Cemetery (Plot 5)
Born Mattie Lou Jones

Information obtained from Mattie Jones Elementary, Tyler Morning Telegraph, and Find a Grave.

Recommended Marker Caption

Mattie Jones was a pioneer Tyler teacher, the only female member of the Chamber of Commerce
for many years , and a long-time member of the Carnegie Library Board . (29 words)



On the cover:

On the front cover and beginning on page 23 are photos and a historical sketch of the Patterson house located at 1311 West Oakwood in Tyler.

LIFE PATRON

James Fair

LIFE MEMBERS

Mrs. Sarah Butler
Mrs. C. N. Clyde
Heritage National Bank
Dr. Ava Josephine McAmis
Mrs. John F. Merrick
Mrs. L. H. Moon
Mrs. Bernard Wolf

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Alex & Nina's Gallery
Henry M. Bell, Jr.
Blackstone Hotel
Borden, Inc.
CL&R Engraving Co.
Citizens First
National Bank
Delta Drilling Co.
Del Edwards
Entex (United Gas)
Exum's
Graham Paper Company
Gulf States Lumber Co.
Hixson-Ellis
Ideal Baking Company
LVO Cable Company
Dr. Julian Mardock
Mrs. Randal Morrow
Robert M. Nall
Will D. Pace
Peoples National Bank
George W. Pirtle
Will Mann Richardson
Mrs. Will Mann Richardson
A. W. Riter, Jr.
Southside State Bank
Story-Wright
Swann Furniture Company
Texas Power & Light Co.
Texas State Optical
Thompson-Hicks Insurance
Tyler Bank & Trust Co.
Tyler Print Shop
Yale Park & Shop
Joe Zeppa

October 24, 1974

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918 Camellia
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Chronicles

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from the collection of Dorothy Albertson

the lone woman member of the Chamber of Commerce for a long period. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction invited her to membership in Delta Kappa Gamma. She was a life member of the Parent-Teachers Association, belonged to the Congress of Mothers and the Texas State Teachers Association, and was on the editorial staff of "English News." She was appointed to be regional adviser for the University of Chicago by its president, Robert M. Hutchins.

Miss Mattie was a member of the board of the Carnegie Public Library for twenty-two years and served as board secretary. Upon her retirement from teaching in 1936, the Tuesday Reading Club, of which she was a long-time active member, commissioned an oil portrait to be hung permanently in the library. Artist Ray Woodney Parks, who painted the portrait, recalls the sittings, "She was a cute old girl. Esther teased her-- and she always had a good answer." The portrait was unveiled at the formal opening of the library annex June 8, 1936, and we have Miss Mattie's remarks upon that occasion:

I shall not gaze upon the picture, for I have never found my face inspiring. I am indeed grateful to have it said that I have contributed something worthwhile to such a splendid city as Tyler, which has produced three governors and is not unlikely to produce a fourth. The most satisfying thing in my life is the knowledge that so many who have sat before me in class have attained positions of honor in our grand nation. From the ranks of my pupils in the past have sprung ministers, doctors, lawyers, secret service men and countless others who have made for themselves places of eminence in the world of affairs. If the presence of my portrait in the Tyler Public Library will be in any sense an inspiration to those who were former pupils of mine, then I am most happy to have it there.

Miss Mattie was included in Notable Women of the Southwest, an encyclopedia of the leading women of Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Arizona, published by William T. Tardy of Dallas in 1938.

When I arrived at her English and speech classes, Miss Mattie was nearing retirement. Her appearance was austere--until you noticed

the twinkle in her eye. She was tall and slender and wore no make-up. Her hair was gray and dressed with a bun on top of her head. She wore long-sleeved, high-necked dresses, which were almost ankle length, black cotton stockings and black oxford shoes. She did not wear hats, and this was in the day when hostesses wore hats in their own homes. She remarked once, "I'd rather have a house on the corner than a hat on my head."

Her house on the corner was located at the intersection of South Bois d'Arc and West Elm Streets. She was the owner of the house but lived there as a guest, as did Colonel and Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Charles Thorn, aunt of the late Congressman Brady P. Gentry, operated a boarding house in the big two-story frame dwelling. It was a popular place to eat when the oil boom came to Tyler in the thirties.

Miss Mattie had a reputation for frugality. When she retired, she was still saving for her old age. I was pleased to learn that she did occasionally indulge herself in small luxuries. Her beginning salary as a teacher was \$25 per month. With her first pay check she bought a gold drinking cup which she carried thereafter on all her travels. Her second check paid for a gold watch.

If Miss Mattie had an extravagance, it was traveling--although she did not consider herself a traveled person, saying, "I've traveled west only as far as Catalina Island, north only as far as Quebec, south only to Mexico City, and east only as far as New York City." She confined her travels to continental North America because she did not wish to "cross the water."

Wherever she went, Miss Mattie practiced rules for good health. Mrs. Sam S. Harrison remembers that she preferred straightback chairs at their club meetings. "We were not allowed to sneeze," says Sadie Campbell, a former student.

Mrs. Warren (Gertrude Talbert) McDonald, who accompanied Miss Mattie to Chicago one summer, recalls their first breakfast in the city. She ordered blueberry muffins and everything on the menu that sounded special, while Miss Mattie had oatmeal, applesauce and milk. She pointed out to young Gertrude that one could eat nutritiously within a modest budget--that her breakfast had equal food value for considerably less money.

Miss Mattie's health rules must have called for a positive attitude for she was cheerful and optimistic. She resolved that even dishwashing was not going to depress her, though she added, "I must admit it was hard to keep pleasant thoughts while doing

the pots and pans."

The Jones family were members of Marvin Methodist Church--all except T. N. Jones, who joined his wife at the Baptist Church when they were married. Miss Mattie attended church regularly but sometimes was not interested in the sermon. When the subject bored her, she would "just sit there and plan my next week's work."

And plan she did. Her classroom was a lively place. Her pupils were exposed to many subjects not in the curriculum, and there were spirited discussions. Though she often quoted "only three out of thirty get the teaching," very few failed her classes. She was available for counseling at all times and sought ways to help her students. I think she felt great responsibility toward her seniors, realizing that high school was all the formal education many of them would have. She was constantly preparing us to "GO OUT INTO THE WORLD."

Going-out-into-the-world was important to her personally. "I want to learn something from everyone I meet," she told a friend. She took long walks everywhere, and when in Chicago, she liked to go out early and explore the city as it was waking up to a new day. One such morning in downtown Chicago she had crossed over to the left side of the sidewalk to see a window display when a burly construction worker hurrying along with his lunch pail almost ran into her. He stopped short, glared, and impatiently yelled, "Get out of my way before I knock you down!" "I said to myself," she related, "Mattie Jones, you are in the world's way--so you pupils must not get in the world's way--the world will not wait for you."

She announced to my class that we would have only one book lesson each week, on Friday, and the other days would be devoted to various practical matters. Once she lectured on how to treat a cold (science is still working on this one)--suggesting proper food, warm clothing, and to clear the head, bending over a steaming kettle of water--all the while demonstrating how to hold the towel to keep the vapor in. Another day we learned about the Travelers Aid Society and what to do if we became lost in the big city. To emphasize this point, she told about an unfortunate young lady who went to the World's Fair in St. Louis. She stepped off the river boat and into a waiting carriage and "that was the last that was ever heard of her."

In the course of the year, each senior was required to (1) write a short story, (2)

write a poem, (3) draw a picture. She declared, "You have no idea how much talent we uncover this way," and explained further in a meeting:

I have no prepared speech to make, but I am simply responding to the request of the superintendent of city schools to give you some idea of what is done in our schools in the way of finding and training embryo writers--without any effort or intention of making writers of our pupils, but simply to give them practice in each of the four forms of discourse.

From the practice and exercise of writing expository and descriptive writing the pupils do not seem to derive much pleasure, but from the practice of story-writing and the writing of rhymes, the students discover themselves and many of them continue to write poems and stories long after it is no longer required.

It is a far more natural thing for a child to tell stories, centered each around one incident, and to write rhymes, even true poems, than to describe any person, place or thing, or to explain. Argumentative tendencies have some charm for them.

I can't say that our schools are entitled to the credit for having developed the following into writers, but they've gone out from Tyler High School: Therese Lindsey, Russell Clark, Inez Baker Howell, Kitty Clyde, Nell Harris Robertson, Favre Baldwin, Charles Parks, Hattie Whitten Swann, Ike Crutcher, Royal Phillips, and too many others to mention.

Another requirement was learning the Ten Commandments. We had to memorize one commandment each week, reporting on Monday, and upon completion, there was a written test.

In her English literature class Miss Mattie favored Dickens and Shakespeare--she took them apart and explained so that the most callow of youths could appreciate these masters. But, she also required of her seniors volumes of "outside reading"--400 pages each six weeks. One semester she made the offer that anyone who read 200 pages of "Les Miserables" would receive credit for 400 pages. "The wily fox," recalls Mrs. C. O. (Eugenia Havenkotte) Bryan, "by the time I had plowed through those

200 dullest, driest pages I was spellbound and had to finish the story. Our family copy was in two volumes, and by report time I handed in more pages than I usually would read all year!"

The first period after lunch was never dull. If anyone looked drowsy, the big boys were asked to open the windows wide--even on the coldest days--then the class faced the windows and did calisthenics--up and down, turn and bend--until no one had a yawn left!

Ethel Havenkotte says, "Her speech was very correct. She used to walk around the school ground at recess, visiting with different groups. One day she heard one of our crowd pronounce "eye-ther" for either. 'Don't use the English pronunciation,' she said, 'unless you use ALL English pronunciation. People in Boston can do so because they pronounce other words with the English accent, but for us in East Texas to use eye-ther and nye-ther would be absurd.' Every time I hear those words, I think of Miss Mattie."

Miss Mattie owned one automobile, pronounced precisely "Shev-ro-lay"--the rest of us were calling them "shivvalays"--but she never did learn to drive successfully. Soon after she acquired the car, she took it out on the Dallas Highway and--it's not clear how it came about--landed in a shallow ditch. She was sitting there pondering her dilemma when one of her former pupils happened along and saw her plight. He drove the car out and home for her. She was heard to remark afterward that she had never thought that young fellow would amount to much but had changed her mind since the accident.

Ray G. Thurmond could not convince Miss Mattie that his name was legally Ray. "Ray is the diminutive of Raymond," she stated, and Raymond is what she called him. Raymond relates further, "I guess the closest she ever came to being risqué was in my class. She liked a composition I wrote and asked me to read it aloud. It was something about the Navy and I used the word 'naval,' pronouncing it with a short 'a.' 'The pronunciation is nay-val,' she said, 'with a long 'a'--like your umbilicus.'"

Mrs. Will Niblack, who was enrolled as Cornelia Alice Alford, was called Cornelia, though everyone else called her Alice. She came whistling happily down the hall one day only to be stopped and reproved by Miss Mattie, "A whistling girl and a cackling hen will never come to a good end!"

"She was clever," comments Theo (Nub) Allen, "--she played a trick on Moco Neeley--it was a good one."

Earl C. Andrews quotes Miss Mattie, "Don't go to school or to town the same way two times in succession--go one way and come back another--don't get in a rut!"

Lorene Ellerd, who was recommended to the library as an apprentice and who remained there to make it her profession, treasures the note from Miss Mattie directing her, "Go at once to the library. . . ."

Her cure for headache made an impression on Mrs. Frank (Hazel Neely) Clements: "Open the window--stand in front of the window, erect but relaxed--inhale and exhale three times--and the headache will be gone."

"Miss Mattie had a fantastic memory," according to Mrs. F. A. (Harriet Jarrel) Wood, Jr. "I saw her years after she retired--not only did she remember that I had a brother, but she remembered Willis' name and all about him!"

Frank Kitchens, Jr. reminisces, "She had a clock . . ." The clock was famous. It was a large, bold-faced Big Ben type which rested on a shelf at the back of her classroom. Miss Mattie was proud of her good eyesight, which allowed her to raise her eyes slightly toward the far corner of the room and note the time of day. Everyone was interested in the clock--something happened to it every day--but Miss Mattie always stood at the door of her room between classes--and no one ever saw anything! It would be turned around to face the wall, the hands moved, turned face down, or sometimes the alarm would go off in the middle of the class period. The football boys liked to turn the hands ahead 15 or 20 minutes--then when the clock showed nearly time for class to be over, the boys would start scuffling their feet--all would join in so no certain boys could be singled out for punishment. Everyone would file out and the boys would head for the drugstore across the street. One day Miss Mattie glanced at the clock and found it at least two hours behind. She remarked calmly, "I hope when you pupils go out into the world that you get along faster than my clock."

No matter how rowdy the class became, Miss Mattie never lost her cool--though often when amused, she would hold her hand in front of her face and chuckle softly.

Miss Mattie liked to mention her pupils who had "made good." To my class she named particularly Nathan Adams, then president of the First National Bank in Dallas, and Judge Thomas B. Ramey, for whom Tyler's Ramey Elementary School is named. Judge Ramey, valedictorian of his class in 1909, had become a distinguished lawyer and civic leader, heading local and state boards of education and holding other prominent positions.

For term papers some years, students were given the names and graduation years of Tyler High School alumni. The student had to research his "name" as to where he was and what he had done since leaving high school.

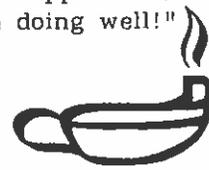
Researching Miss Mattie was fun--I found that nearly everyone had a story to tell--stories told with affection and often humor of memorable days in her classroom. There are a few people around who feel as if they were never really graduated from Tyler High School because she did not teach them.

Miss Mattie believed in her pupils and taught them to search for excellence in all things. They possibly did not anticipate her influence on their lives--but did understand her devotion to them. The first edition of the *Alcalde*, Tyler High's yearbook, was dedicated to her in 1910, and over the years there were others.

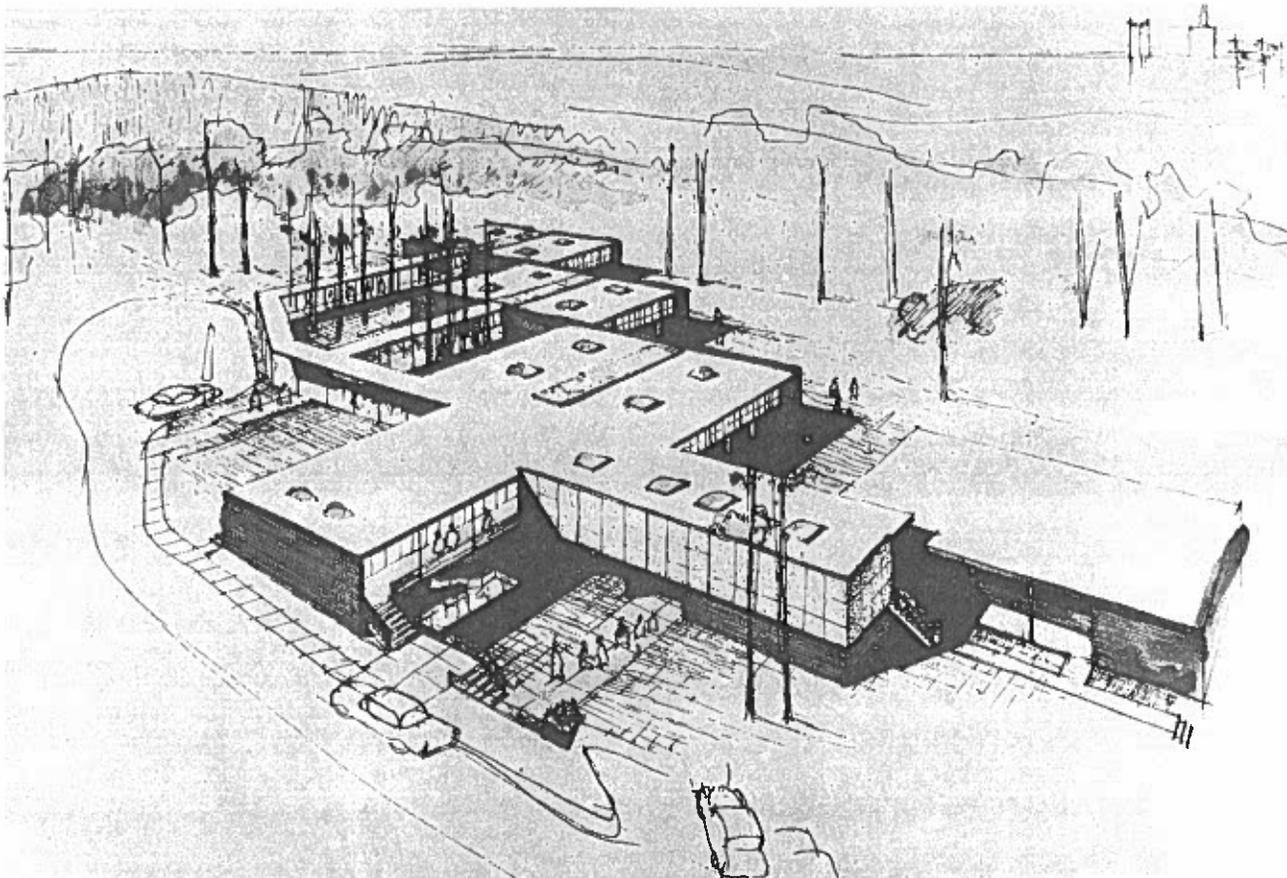
Miss Mattie died in 1944 and was buried in Oakwood Cemetery. The city's memorial to her is the Mattie L. Jones Elementary School, a spacious modern structure on a 13-acre site, built in 1955.

The world never lost its fascination for Miss Mattie. If she were with us today, I don't think she would sit contentedly by the fire. She could be mildly sympathetic toward women's lib--independence was one key to her character. She would likely dismiss pornographic movies as simply "bad taste"--but we might find her on the front row at a rock concert, head turned slightly and watching with her bright eyes to see what the young people were up to!

Miss Mattie would like television for its ringside seat on history in the making--but what about the world she knew being expanded into space? I think when our astronauts landed on the moon she would have applauded, "A job worth doing at all is worth doing well!"



LUCILLE MARDOCK is a Tyler native who speaks with first-hand knowledge of her subject, Miss Mattie Jones, for Miss Mattie was her high school teacher. She has been a member of the Smith County Historical Society for two years and is currently employed as a secretary by the B. G. Byars estate.



The Mattie L. Jones Elementary School, located on a thirteen acre tract on West Front Street, was erected during the 1955-56 session. (Drawing courtesy of the architect, E. Davis Wilcox of Tyler.)

About the

Half Mile of History

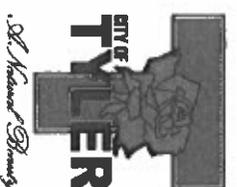
The City of Tyler's historic preservation program, the Half Mile of History, resulted from a recommendation that came out of the Tyler 21 planning process. The fifth goal of the Historic Preservation Chapter is:

"Promote and display diverse aspects of Tyler's history to enhance resident and visitor awareness of its importance."

The goal of the Half Mile of History is to pay tribute to people, places and events that have contributed to the rich history of Tyler and Smith County.

The Half Mile of History is a permanent, outdoor, half-mile loop that surrounds the square in the heart of downtown Tyler.

Stone plaques are placed in the sidewalk along the Half Mile of History to commemorate significant people, places or events.



Half Mile of History Marker Unveiling

in honor of

Mattie Jones

Joe Zeppa

Sarah McElendon

Thursday, March 7, 2013

Miss Mattie L. Jones was a pioneer Tyler teacher and civic worker. For many years "Miss Mattie," as she was familiarly known to her students, taught English and public speaking in Tyler High School. She retired in 1936, having completed 41 years as a public school teacher. Miss Mattie died in 1944 and was buried in Oakwood Cemetery. The community's memorial to her is the Mattie L. Jones Elementary School built in 1955. Mattie Jones Elementary was originally located at 2521 West Front in Tyler.

Giuseppe Zeppa was born on Aug. 2, 1893, on a farm in northern Italy. He emigrated to the U.S. as a 12-year-old boy, arriving in New York in 1906. As an adult, Zeppa made association with several partners, who formed Delta Drilling Company. Zeppa moved his family to Tyler in 1933, along with the principal offices of Delta Drilling Company in 1937. Starting in the East Texas oil boom with two junk rigs, Zeppa built his company from the ground up into an American success story and a formidable empire. Joe Zeppa died of a heart attack at his farm outside of Tyler on July 4, 1975.

Sarah Newcomb McClendon was a long-time White House reporter who covered presidential politics for a half-century. McClendon founded her own free-lance news service as a single mother in the post-World War II era, and became known as a model for women in the press. McClendon was best known, however, for her questions at United States Presidential press conferences, which often ranged from aggressive to brash or blunt.

Staff Mile of History Marker Unveiling

in honor of

Mattie Jones

Joe Zeppa

Sarah McClendon

Thursday, March 7, 2013

Opening Remarks: Mayor Barbara Bass

Staff Mile of History honoree histories by:

Historical Preservation Board Member Bryan Campbell

Historical Preservation Board Member Jim Robertson

Historical Preservation Board Chair Mike Patterson

Unveiling of Markers and Certificate Presentation

Responses

Special Announcements

Adjourn, reception following