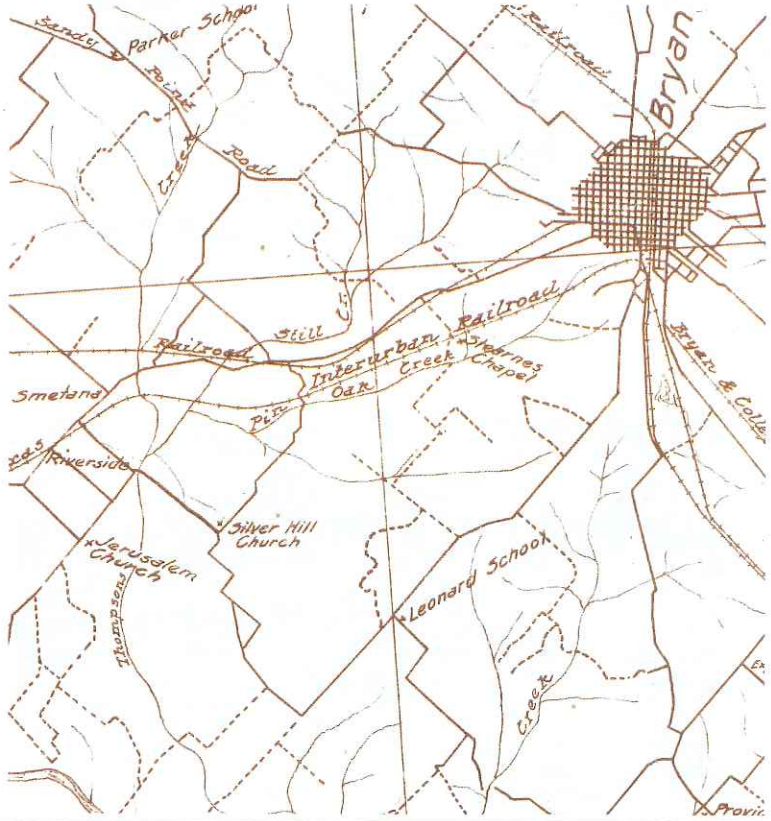
LEONARD SCHOOL

TEXAS HISTORICAL MARKER DEDICATION CEREMONY

MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2017
10:00 A.M.

JONES ROAD AT LEONARD ROAD
BRYAN, TEXAS



PROGRAM

Welcome:
Mr. Henry Mayo
Chair – Brazos Co. Historical Comm.

Invocation:
Mr. Jason Bienski
Former Mayor of Bryan
(from Leonard area family)

Brief History of Leonard School and area:
Mr. Henry Mayo

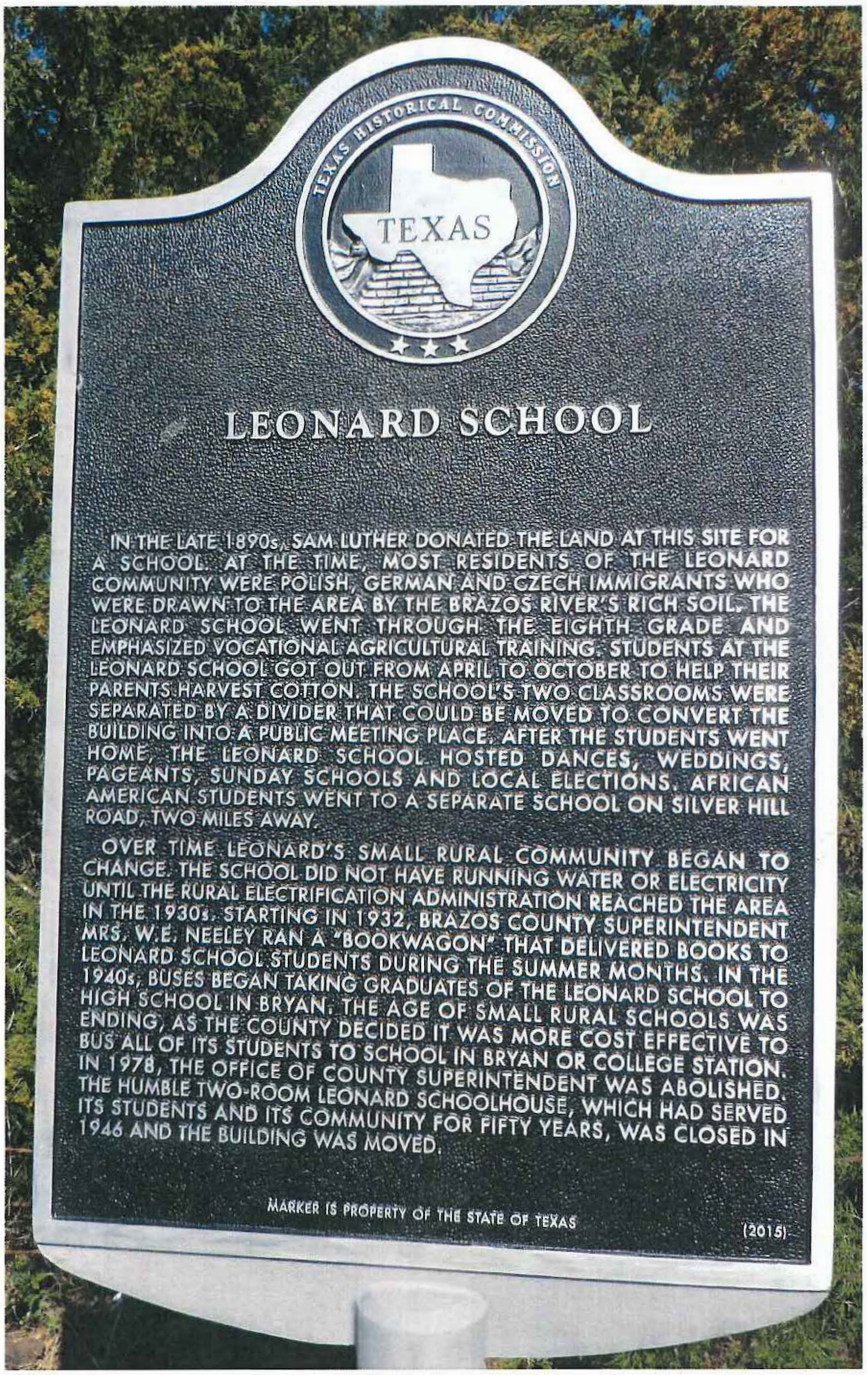
Unveiling of Historical Marker:
Mrs. Regina (Stetz) Opersteny & family
Marker Applicant and Sponsor

Acceptance of Marker:
Mr. Duane Peter, County Judge
Ms. Irma Cauley, Pct. 4 Commissioner

Closing Comments:
Mr. Henry Mayo

Leonard School - circa 1925

1. Frank Boriski
2. Tommie Paradowski
3. Rueben Berger
4. Fred Luther
5. John Boriskie
6. Mary Krezenskie
7. Helen Bienski
8. Lillie Mae Berger
9. Josephine Boriski
10. Mary Oliver Berger
11. Albina Blazek
12. Nettie Krezenskie
13. Martin Paradowski
14. Clyde Berger
15. Ted Bukowski
16. Cecilia Krezenskie
17. _____ Luther
18. _____
19. Pauline Blazek
20. Eleanor Lovell
21. AnnaMae Boriskie
22. Charlie Paradowski
23. Helen Bukowski
24. Agnes Lero
25. Stella Krezenskie
26. Mrs. Hearne


TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
TEXAS
LEONARD SCHOOL
IN THE LATE 1890s, SAM LUTHER DONATED THE LAND AT THIS SITE FOR A SCHOOL. AT THE TIME, MOST RESIDENTS OF THE LEONARD COMMUNITY WERE POLISH, GERMAN AND CZECH IMMIGRANTS WHO WERE DRAWN TO THE AREA BY THE BRAZOS RIVER'S RICH SOIL. THE LEONARD SCHOOL WENT THROUGH THE EIGHTH GRADE AND EMPHASIZED VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL TRAINING. STUDENTS AT THE LEONARD SCHOOL GOT OUT FROM APRIL TO OCTOBER TO HELP THEIR PARENTS HARVEST COTTON. THE SCHOOL'S TWO CLASSROOMS WERE SEPARATED BY A DIVIDER THAT COULD BE MOVED TO CONVERT THE BUILDING INTO A PUBLIC MEETING PLACE. AFTER THE STUDENTS WENT HOME, THE LEONARD SCHOOL HOSTED DANCES, WEDDINGS, PAGEANTS, SUNDAY SCHOOLS AND LOCAL ELECTIONS. AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS WENT TO A SEPARATE SCHOOL ON SILVER HILL ROAD, TWO MILES AWAY.
OVER TIME, LEONARD'S SMALL RURAL COMMUNITY BEGAN TO CHANGE. THE SCHOOL DID NOT HAVE RUNNING WATER OR ELECTRICITY UNTIL THE RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION REACHED THE AREA IN THE 1930s. STARTING IN 1932, BRAZOS COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT MRS. W.E. NEELEY RAN A "BOOKWAGON" THAT DELIVERED BOOKS TO LEONARD SCHOOL STUDENTS DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS. IN THE 1940s, BUSES BEGAN TAKING GRADUATES OF THE LEONARD SCHOOL TO HIGH SCHOOL IN BRYAN. THE AGE OF SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS WAS ENDING, AS THE COUNTY DECIDED IT WAS MORE COST EFFECTIVE TO BUS ALL OF ITS STUDENTS TO SCHOOL IN BRYAN OR COLLEGE STATION. IN 1978, THE OFFICE OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT WAS ABOLISHED. THE HUMBLE TWO-ROOM LEONARD SCHOOLHOUSE, WHICH HAD SERVED ITS STUDENTS AND ITS COMMUNITY FOR FIFTY YEARS, WAS CLOSED IN 1946 AND THE BUILDING WAS MOVED.
MARKER IS PROPERTY OF THE STATE OF TEXAS
(2015)