

Smoke From The Chimneys



Long Beach Historical Society

Remembering the past to preserve our future

April 2014

President's Message

What would Long Beach be like if it had no Churches?

Fortunately, we do not have to be concerned because churches of different denominations, large and small, have been in existence from our city's earliest years.

In her book, "Rosalie and Radishes," Mary Ellen Alexander devotes an entire chapter to the churches in Long Beach and their histories. BUT—are these histories being preserved?

My church, First Baptist Long Beach, lost numerous artifacts, photographs, and written documents relating to its history in Hurricane Katrina. In an effort to restore as much history as possible, the church appointed a volunteer Historian to oversee the collection and preservation of historically-valuable materials.

People keep "Stuff," such as old pictures, church bulletins, written letters, in attic trunks and shoe boxes only to be discarded from memory. Often these forgotten "treasures" can help tell part of a

church history. For example, one church member found a photo of a note burning in the 1970s; another had saved a bell rung manually to start Sunday School in the 1930s; one lady discovered a "funeral-home" fan saved from an early revival! All such "discoveries" give a personal touch to church histories.

Here's the point: The next time you have an opportunity to talk with your pastor or church leader, ask, "What are we doing to preserve our church history. Is anyone collecting old pictures, artifacts, and documents?" If the answer is a positive one, extend your encouragement and support. If the answer is "little or nothing," suggest starting a Historical Preservation Committee of like-minded members interested in church history.

The churches in Long Beach are an important part of the city's history and each has a story to tell. Let's help ensure these histories are preserved for future generations.

Donald Dana

Vice President/Program Chairman Message

At the January meeting, our annual awards were given to some deserving folks in our community. The Mary Ellen Alexander Award Lifetime Achievement Award for 2013 went to Dr Deanne Nuwer of USM who was educated on the coast and later began teaching school and college here also .We congratulate Dr Nuwer for espousing all of the elements of the Mary Ellen Alexander Award. She has written numerous invaluable articles, publications and books beneficial to our area and state.

The Harper McCaughan Award went to Father Louis Lohan of St Thomas Church who has been a spiritual inspiration, a friend and leader to all, whatever their faith. We're happy to add this award to the long line of others that Fr Louis has already amassed from around the coast.

Two Friends of the Society Award were given again this year, one to Paul Jermyn, who never hesitates to share his time or his pictures. He was very helpful with the layout

Vice President to page 2

**SMOKE FROM THE
CHIMNEYS
LONG BEACH, MS**

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**Long Beach
Historical Society**

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(South side of the central fire station on Klondyke RD)

Meetings are always quarterly and on the 2nd Monday at the Historical Society Building, 645 Klondyke Rd. Notifications will be sent if anything changes.

2014 Meetings:

January 13, Monday, 11:00 AM
April 14, Monday, 6:00 PM
July 14, Monday, 6:00 PM
Oct 13, Monday, 6:00 PM

Email Address:

lbhistoricalsociety@lbhistoricalsociety.org

Website: www.lbhistoricalsociety.org

Eddie Ware – Webmaster

Mission Statement

The Society's purpose is "to bring together those people interested in the history of the City of Long Beach and to coordinate their efforts in preserving and recording that history for future generations."

Long Beach Historical Society is a volunteer-based organization dedicated to the:

- Preservation and management of historic and cultural resources of Long Beach
- Provide educational opportunities for both its membership and the public

Vice President From Page 1

of our recent calendar and some of his pictures adorn the walls of our society building. The other to Jeanne Ripoll who has assisted us in allowing book sales, calendar sales, displays, etc. in her library, not to mention some upcoming furniture donations. Thank you to these true friends.

We were very pleased to have Frances Lucas Ph. D. as our speaker at the January meeting and Soup Luncheon. Dr. Lucas, Vice President and Executive Officer of the USM Gulf Coast campus was assisted by Jason Bigelow, the Campus Architect and Director of the Physical Plant. They brought us up to date on the campus, including majors offered and the updating and repairs to all of the buildings and so much more information. It was a very informative program followed by an interesting question and answer period that everyone seemed to enjoy and they were ready with questions. We've all been invited to stroll around the campus and use its facilities. See you there!

Our speaker for the April meeting has taken ill and cannot be with us so I've planned a program that includes old newspaper articles from the turn of the 20th century. Have you ever heard the old L&N railroad referred to as the "rapid-fire" transit or that there were ports of entry and also ports of delivery? There was a port of entry for 83 years that began in 1821 before Gulfport took its place. Join us for the answers to these interesting questions.

Beth Hansen

Announcements

**Yearly Dues Were Due in
January**

Since the inception of the society the bylaws have always stated that anyone in arrears on dues for more than 90 days after payment is due shall be dropped from membership. We always want to see your smiling faces at the meetings and also keep Smoke from the Chimneys in your mailboxes so please keep those checks coming in, the society depends on them. This is the first year that dues have become due at the beginning of a year since the society was begun in 1997. Previously they were due in August coinciding with the inception date that was chosen to correspond with the incorporation date of the city. Hopefully the new date will make it easier to remember – new year, new dues!! And don't forget, you got several free months of membership last year!

Dues run Jan. 1 - Dec. 31

- **\$15.00 Individual**
- **\$20.00 Family**
- **\$5.00 Student**

Either send in a check to
P. O. Box 244

Membership form on page 7
or pay online at our website:

www.lbhistoricalsociety.org

Payment is through Paypal.
(An account with Paypal is not required to do this).

Meeting Frequency

Several months back, at a meeting, a member suggested that the number of meetings held each year should be increased for more continuity. The Board took this under advisement and recommends that two more meetings be added, for a total of six each year. A vote will be taken from the membership for action on this matter.



Condolences

to the families and friends of the following who have gone on to their eternal reward:

Catherine "Bea" Windham, Donna Bernius, Melissa Patterson Patton, Margaret Dubuisson, George Barnett, Angela Pucheu, Phillip Allen, Florence Gottschalk, Elsie Hutto, Mary Noble, Augusta Mason, Pete Morreale, Chuck Boyd, Richard Ervin, Charlotte Sharp, William Harris III, Steven Steady, Bobbie L Molsbee, Audrey Clark, Yvonne Smith, Sylvia Hanshew, Declan Poolson, Velma Claudine Spruill, John Rosetti, June Fillette, June Ladner, Neil Rothe, Jo Stacher, Cathy Warf, Lorena Harris, Elsie Rishel, Harold Carroll, Finis E Cooper, Allen "Baby" Holder, Karen Creel Leary, Tony Serrato, Frederick Peter Westermeyer, Dr Roderick Nuwell, Kayla Maniccia, Kathleen McCurry, Bill Hickman, Kathryn Magee, Daria Gregov, Stephen Mauffray, Martha Fitzgerald, Ronald Cogley, Easton Wyatt Tefft, Alan Pitts, Myrna Elmere Donley Mayo, William Keith Harris, Chester Alan Boyd and Dorothy Files Carrubba. Also our former governor, Bill Allain

and retired Rear Admiral and POW, and a former Alabama senator, the innovative Morse code blinking Jeremiah A Denton, Jr.

Response to our Family Histories

At the January meeting, we received another family story from member June Bosarge O'Neal. June would like to create her family's folder in memory of her sister, Robin Bosarge Thorn who was also a society member before her early death in 2012. Robin had done a great deal of family research and June would like to continue the endeavor.

The following information was taken from June's family story. It can be read in its entirety at the Historical Society library.

June & Robin's great grandparents were John Henry Bosarge and Callie Lott. Their son, George J was grandfather to the girls.

June had spoken to her grandfather, back in 1993 and recorded some of his recollections about his growing up days here in Long Beach. He said that his father owned many acres of land on Klondyke & Commission roads and also in Gulfport and that he built a large frame house with 14' high ceilings on Klondyke Rd where his children were born, George being

the first born in the house.

At that time, they lived outside of the city limits and George attended a one-room school house on Pineville Rd.



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When asked what he remembered most about his mother, George said there was no electricity in their house and the children did not have beds. Their mother would make pallets on the floor for the 11 children to sleep on. One particularly hot night he awoke to see his mother fanning him and his siblings to keep them cool enough to sleep. A good memory indeed.

When George was 19 he bought a marriage license for himself and his future bride, Lillie Mae Ladnier, 18. He took it to her home and asked her mother if he could talk to her and when she came out, he showed her the license. She said, "What makes you think I will marry you?" And he replied, "Don't you love me?" She agreed and after being engaged for 3 days, they got married the following Saturday. Another good memory.

Think about putting some thoughts together about your own families as June Bosarge O'Neal and Monnie Little Shirley have done. You may have some clippings

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that we may copy or a printed genealogy, anything that you'd like to contribute for others to see. You never know when your distant cousins may come in to find out about their families and you could end up meeting new kin. Or, other residents may just enjoy reading about your family, especially if they were acquainted back in the day.

Mississippi Historical Society Annual Meeting

Coast names seemed to dominate the 2014 Annual meeting of the state Historical Society held March 6-8 in the House Chamber of the Old Capital Museum in Jackson.

It was mentioned that outgoing president, Charles L Sullivan was only one of 4 from the 6 counties of South Mississippi to lead MHS since its inception in 1858. The others were Roland Weston of Logtown, M James Stevens of Biloxi and our own Donald Dana of Long Beach.

Val Husley spoke about the Seafood Museum, Douglas Myatt, the Walter Anderson Museum of Art. Louis Kyriakoudes of USM and our own Paul Jermyn both received Awards of Merit. Paul's was for



Photo courtesy Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

his exemplary work in locating, securing and sharing invaluable historic images and documents. Seems that he is using a Fairy Godfather approach with these historical artifacts. He locates and buys them and "sends them home" all over the U. S. We already knew that he's great about sharing his photographs. Congratulations Paul.

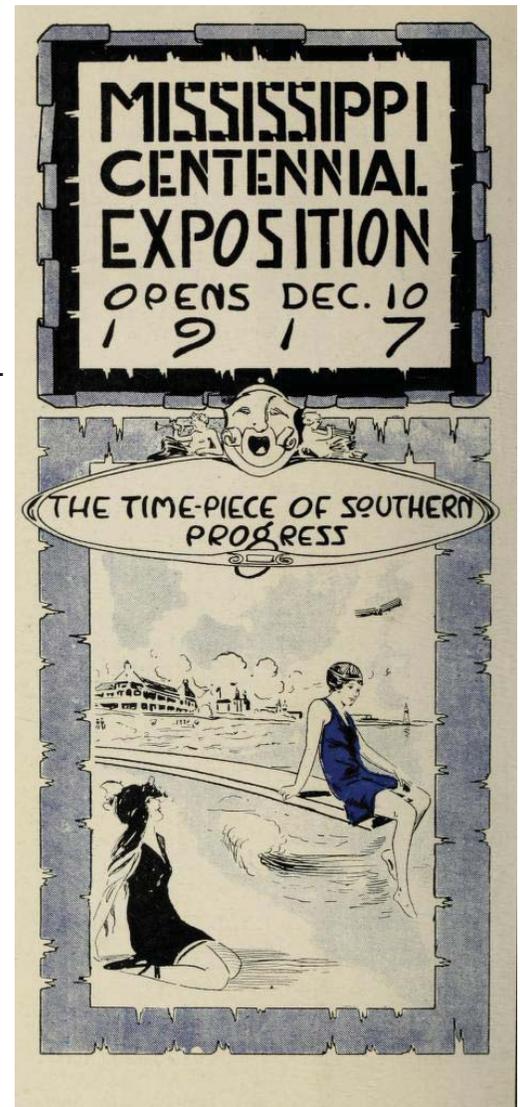
Kudos to Mayor Billy Hewes for requesting that the 2017 MHS meeting be held in Gulfport in commemoration of the Centennial Exposition. Since the expo never took place after all of the planning and construction, it will be a fitting tribute one hundred years after the fact. The motion was made and adopted by the board of directors. We must make it a point to attend this meeting in 2017.

A Chapter in the Life of our Sister City, Gulfport

Prompted by Mayor Billy Hewes of Gulfport, a refresher on the Centennial/VA property is in order.

We've all passed in front of the old VA Hospital in Gulfport throughout our lives and possibly some of us or other family members may have even worked on the property. Most of us know that the complex of beautiful old buildings was constructed early in the twentieth century for some type of exhibit that never took place due to WWI. Periodically, articles are written about it in the paper. Now is a good time to reflect on this chapter of Coast history.

The Mississippi Centennial Exposition was slated for a



December 19, 1917 opening. The Expo was to have run for six months, closing on June 10, 1918. The purpose was to highlight all of the advances made by the state since its admission into the union one hundred years earlier in 1817.

The reason that the expo was to have been held in Gulfport is because the idea for it was conceived by Gulfportians in January 1912 and afterwards a contingent of interested parties went to Jackson and pushed it to the legislature which approved it. However 3 years went by and nothing had been done. Gulfport

then learned that the cities of Jackson and Natchez both had petitioned the legislature to host the expo. Hearing this news caused Gulfport to drastically ramp up its efforts on November 29, 1915 and by March 1916, city, county and state funds had been appropriated and a celebration was held replete with cannons booming and bands playing signaling a kick off. In order to be ready for the proposed opening everything would have to be completed in only 18 short months.

At the time it was felt that although having made history in the realms of literature, art, science, statesmanship and industry, the state had failed in self-advertising. The Centennial Exposition would be an historical occasion to exploit the wonderful agricultural, horticultural, industrial and commercial resources of Mississippi and even adjoining states.

A description of the proposed grand affair said it would be staged within a few rods of the shores of the Gulf of Mexico where magnificent homes extended for miles along the shell roads that skirted the shore line.

The Expo would take place on grounds that covered 147 acres. Exhibits were to be displayed in permanent buildings constructed in Spanish Colonial

Revival style. There would be the Mississippi, the Coliseum, Women, Education, Manufacturing, Arts and Crafts, Efficiency, Administration, Lumbermen, Negro and Federal buildings. It was a grand undertaking.

The Centennial would have been the first exposition of national scope held in the far South within 30 years and apparently it was a well known fact. In the advertising, folks were invited to not only visit but to spend the winter here. The following paragraph speaks volumes: Here one may find health, pleasure, plenty, industrial and agricultural opportunity, a climate that leads to contentment and the land that allures. What more can one ask, a playground and yet a frontier for commercial development.

The U S Government had formally recognized the Centennial and authorized the President to invite foreign nation participation. Apparently some had accepted and even sister states were going to have exhibits at Gulfport. President Woodrow Wilson was no stranger to the Coast, having spent Christmas of 1913 in Pass Christian and Gulfport was planning a "Wilson Day" at some point during the 6 months of the Expo in anticipation of welcoming the president back to the area again.

Construction had been progressing along during 1916 and early 1917 in preparation for the December opening and although WWI had been

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going on since 1914, it wasn't until April 1917 that the United States declared war on Germany. Not long afterward three infantry companies arrived in Gulfport and took up guard duty along the G&SI Railroad and out on the pier. Many men enlisted and three companies of home guards were formed by men not eligible to serve on active duty and all sorts of efforts were made to help the cause and conserve resources.

At the end of April the centennial commission postponed the exposition until February of 1919 and representatives from Gulfport went to Washington and offered the site to the government as a naval training base for the duration of the war. The government accepted and the site was formally commissioned on April 26, 1918. Naval occupation continued at the site until 1921 at which time the mayor of Gulfport went to Washington and persuaded the government to convert it into a rehabilitation hospital for shell-shocked veterans. Approval was granted and the veterans began to arrive at the end of July of that year.

After the war was over the city apparently did not see the need to resurrect the former Centennial plans after the 100th anniversary had come and gone. Perhaps it could have been held shortly after

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the Navy left the premises and before the city asked the government to use the site for a Veterans Hospital.

In 1980, when the property was given National Register status about 30 of the original buildings were still intact. After hurricane Katrina, a 2007 report from a National Register of Historic places historian deemed it still eligible for the coveted award in spite of its losses from historical alterations and storm damage.

Then in 2012, the Gulfport Redevelopment Commission entered into a public/private partnership with Glastonbury Capital for the potential development of the property into a mixed-use luxury vacation community called Centennial Plaza. This will include restaurants, offices and hotel accommodations.

Most of the lifers in this area have always known the property to be the Veterans Hospital and are now eagerly awaiting the next phase in the life of this beautiful acreage with the lovely old Spanish style buildings on Beach Boulevard in Gulfport.

The above information was culled from; archive.org, savemyplaces.com, and the book, Gulfport-Beginnings and Growth by Henry W Black

Thank You Note from Father Louis

To the Officers and Board of Directors of the Long Beach Historical Society.

Thank you for choosing me to receive the 2013 Harper McCaughan Award from the Long Beach Historical Society. I am honored to be a part of the history of this community.

Thank you to all of you and the members of the Historical Society for what you do to promote and develop the history of Long Beach.

*God Bless,
Fr. Louis*

A sincere Happy Birthday to Mrs. Claire Boggs Morrison who will be 99 years old on April 12. We're proud to have Miz Claire as a member of the society and send our best wishes out to her on this special occasion!

HARRISON COUNTY
ELECTION COMMISSION



BARBARA KIMBALL
DISTRICT 3

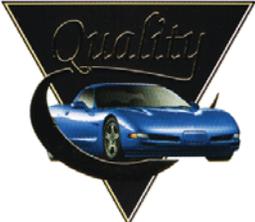
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Long Beach Historical Society

Yearly membership is January 1 – December 31
payable beginning at the January meeting as follows:

- \$15.00 per individual
- \$20.00 for family
- \$5.00 per student

Those who are unable to attend the January meeting may mail a check too:
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Long Beach, MS 39560

Name:

Spouse:

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I would like to serve on the Committee to identify historic homes that survived Katrina.

I would like to serve on another Committee.

Comments:

Cut

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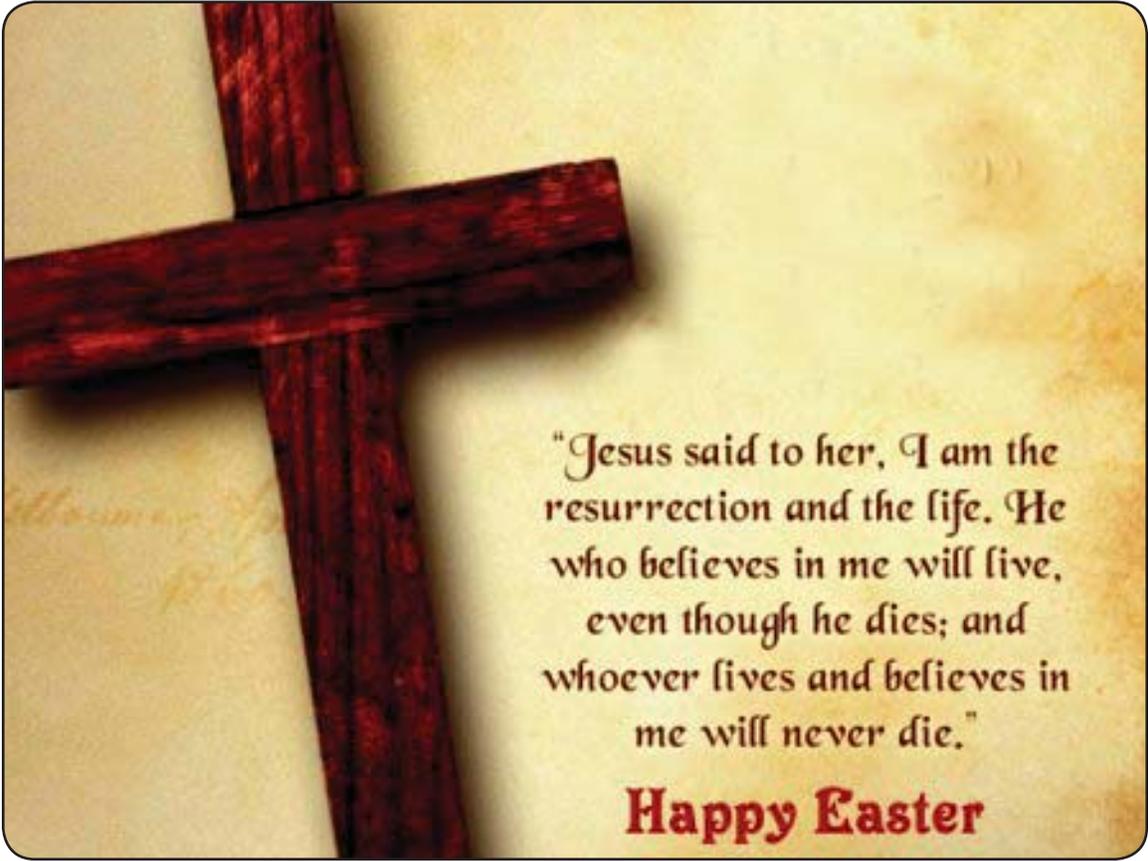
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