

# Smoke From The Chimneys



# Long Beach Historical Society

Remembering the past to preserve our future

January 2017

## President's Message

Happy New Year to all! I hope that all of the inclement weather hasn't been too unkind to all of you. I know it's been bad around the countryside in places where many former Long Beachians now reside.

As you all know, the January meeting is our Annual Awards Luncheon. Like last year, the meeting will be short and focus on the awards and recipients. Make plans to come and have lunch with us.

The unveiling of the 2017 calendar will also take place at the meeting. The theme this year is "Fun in the Sun" in Long Beach, Mississippi and harkens back to the days of the tourist courts that dotted the entire coast line. We did feature two old hotels and a guest house but most of the pictures are of the traditional courts.

It's amazing how many people came here to the coast and to Long Beach on a regular basis, back in

the day. Local tourist courts had a regular clientele that came back year after year during their heyday. The courts were a viable business during the years before airplane travel became more frequent and hurricanes became so unkind to our area. At any rate, we hope you'll be happy with the memories we've brought back, so plan to make your purchases.

Remember the sale of the calendars is our ONLY fund raiser of the year and we SO depend on it along with yearly dues which are also due this month. Some members like to give our calendars as gifts since they seem to be a collectable item.

Working on the calendar this year were Allisa Beck, Eddie Ware, and myself. Thanks so much Allisa and Eddie, it was a pleasure.

It's already been decided that the 2018 calendar will be on Gulf Park College and Allisa will be in charge of it. We have plans for a much earlier release and are hopeful it will be sought after by Gulf Park

graduates along with the rest of us who enjoyed having the college in our little town.

The Cemetery Tour in October was a great success and the society received many compliments on it. I think the tour has improved each year and we've been lucky to have many re-enactors, some actual descendants, who have enjoyed taking part. Thanks to any of you who may have helped out on the tour in any way. Special thanks to Brenda Batey, the chair, who has a separate thank-you here in Smoke from the Chimneys.

Two important events will be happening this year that we should be thinking about. One is the Twentieth Anniversary of the society, which will take place in August. It will be a time for celebrating and also remembering Mary Ellen Watrous Alexander, our founder.

Another is the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Historical Society

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President from page 1

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

Beth Hansen: Editor  
228-864-6100

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**Long Beach  
Historical Society**

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**Mailing Address:**

P. O. Box 244  
Long Beach, MS 39560-0244

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645 Klondyke RD

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

Meetings will all be held on the THIRD Mondays at Historical Society Building, 645 Klondyke Rd.

**2017 Meetings:**

- **January 16 - 11:00 am (Awards)**
- April 17 - 6:00 pm
- July 17 - 6:00 pm
- October 16 - 6:00 pm

**Email Address:**

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**Website:** www.lbhistoricalsociety.com

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

which will be taking place in Gulfport. Three years ago Mayor Billy Hewes issued an invitation to the state group to have the Bicentennial meeting here and to commemorate the planned Centennial Exhibition of 1917, which would've taken place in Gulfport and had to be canceled due to WWI.

The meeting takes place March 2-4, 2017 in Gulfport with all sessions being held at the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center at 246 Dolan Ave in Gulfport. Early registration fee is \$35 for MHS members and \$60 for non-members. The price increases after Feb 19. The meeting doesn't usually take place so close to us so this will be an opportunity to attend.

Sincerely,

Beth Hansen,  
President



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**The Plainview Tourist Court**

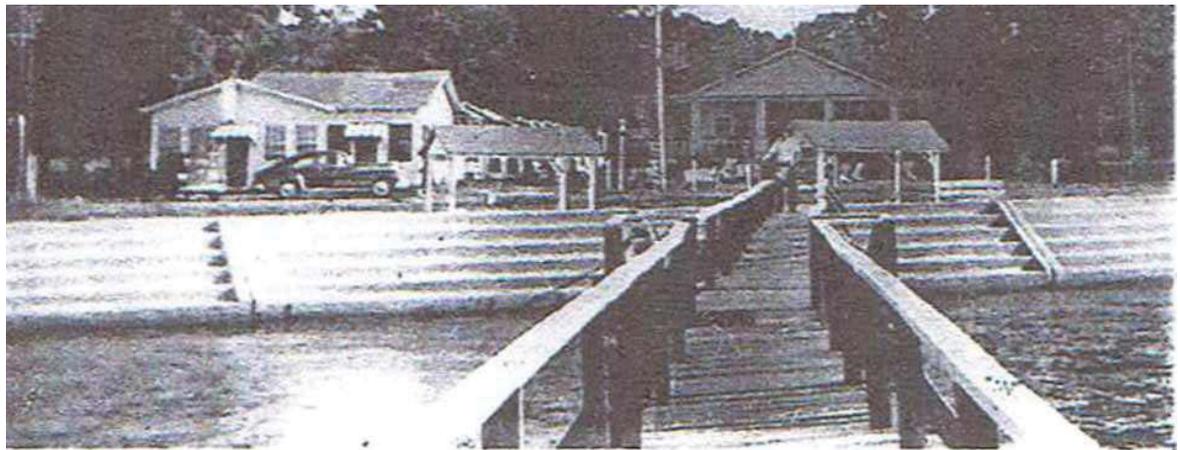
*For the month of June in the new calendar, you will notice the Plainview Tourist Court and Cottages. The daughter of former Police Chief Harry Kaletsch, one of the young children hanging onto that inner tube during the '47 hurricane, is also a former member of our society, Catherine Kaletsch Woodward. Several years back, Catherine wrote of the experiences for Smoke from the Chimneys, and here is her amazing story again.*

**The '47 Hurricane September 19, 1947**

Our family moved from Galesburg, Illinois, to Long Beach in 1946. My parents, Harry and Helen Kaletsch moved us here because of my mother's health. My parents operated Plainview Café with my Aunt Phil and Uncle Ed Kaletsch. We all lived in the tourist court on the property. There were about 10 cabins and the main office was in the owner's home, a large house on pillars.

We all knew that a storm was coming. The radio broadcasts out of New Orleans warned of a storm coming in the morning and to stay if you had shelter. This was the Hurricane of '47. There was no sand beach and the water came up to the seawall. We anticipated a storm surge, and as a precaution we put all the chairs and stools on top of the counter so they would not get wet.

During the height of the storm, the Gulf invaded our home. The water covered everything and got deeper. Everyone gathered in the main house. We were all in the kitchen at the rear of the house discussing what to do. My parents were worried the house would be pulled out to sea when it was washed off the pillars.



**Plainview and Kaletsch home before '47 Hurricane.**

There were eight of us in the house. The water began to inch up, and soon we were in waist deep water. As we stood in the kitchen we could hear the waves crashing and breaking the windows. My dad decided we had to get out of the house.

None of us were prepared to leave the safety of a building. My parents, my brother Nub, and I, along with a family friend Reggie McCaughan, decided to abandon the house. We were preparing to exit the back door when a large bobcat tried to swim in the door. Daddy and Reggie managed to scare him away before he could get in.

Luckily, as we came out Dad found a small inner tube. Five of us clung to it while floating in 20 feet of water. The creosote treated lumber stored under the house smelled terrible and left a horrible taste when the water splashed in our mouths. While we were hanging onto this tube, a water moccasin swam by and wrapped around my mother's neck.



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*Hurricane to page 4*



*Helen Kaletsch surveys the damage.*

*Hurricane from Page 3*

Dad somehow managed to grab it and fling it away. My uncle and aunt, with their one-year-old son Danny, did not leave the house when we did. The water chased them to the attic and then the rooftop. They went from cabin roof to cabin roof until they were forced to get in the water.

Four hours later we were able to get to land at the railroad track near the area where Green Acres is today. I could not move my arm from holding onto the inner tube for all that time. I did not know how to swim! When the storm was over everyone gathered at Jeff Davis School to check on survivors. My uncle and his family were safe. We were saddened to learn that our housekeeper had drowned.

Our homes and businesses did not fare well during the storm. The only thing left of Plainview Café was the cement slab. Everything was gone! We were homeless and had lost all our possessions. All we had were the clothes on our backs. Billy Triplett (Triplett-Day Drugs)

and his wife Sara took us in. We stayed with them until we could make arrangements to leave. The women and children of our family left by train to Illinois while my dad and uncle stayed in Long Beach to find work and housing. We returned in about a month. My brother and I had to go back to school.

*Catherine, unfortunately, also has stories from other hurricanes, which we'll share at a later date, and we thank her for providing us with this glimpse into the 1947 hurricane.*

**2017 DUES ARE DUE**  
**Membership Jan 1 - Dec. 31**

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

**Payment Options:**

1. Pay at meeting
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3. Pay online at our website:  
[www.lbhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.lbhistoricalsociety.com)

**Miscellaneous Tourist Court Information**

According to past city directories for our area, in 1936, there were only a handful of tourist courts on the coast and three of them were here in Long Beach, English Village; Cottages on the Gulf; and Faechers Cottages. All three were located on East Beach Blvd.

In just three more years, by 1939, there were considerably more and included Green Gables; Johnson's Cottages; Kit Carson's; Long Beach Tourist Cabins; Starkey's Cottages; and the White Castle Guest Home.

Between 1939 and 1947, Long Beach additions were: The Boggs Tourist Camp; Gulfview Court; Mount Vernon Cottages; and The Plainview.

1953 showed new additions of Gulf Manor Court; Holiday Shores; Magnolia Inn; Monroe Cottages; Pine Lodge Motor Court; and Wood's Cottages.

1958: Beach Tourist Court; Chehardy's Courts (old Plainview) Holiday Inn, (old Holiday Shores); Sea Wall Motel. There were eleven in operation at this time.

Lastly, in 1960, there were eight in operation with one being new, the Surfcomber Motel on West Beach. A few others had closed since 1958.

How many times have you been away from home and said, "Wow, this place is fabulous, I'd like to move here and go into business!" Many business owners in popular

spots have owned up to this, when asked. Owners of coast tourist courts may have done just that. We all know the area is beautiful, even without blue water!

The Plainview, from Catherine K Woodward's memories, was one of the earliest courts on the coast, built in 1928 by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Waddell of New Orleans. They had also lived in Texas and Oklahoma and were known to travel extensively by motor. They purposely left all the native pines on the property and landscaped it with roses and shrubs and had the cottages built on an angle so as to secure a view from both directions of the waters of the Sound. Very thoughtful on their parts.

Mrs. Waddell stayed here after her husband's death and had a manager to take care of the court.

Hugh and Ineta Campbell of the English Village Courts may have picked a spot convenient just for them as they were members of St Thomas Catholic Church and are remembered as having their favorite Sunday seating spot by regulars at the church. Ineta was born in Louisiana and Hugh in Tennessee. Census records show that he lived in several different states before settling here on the coast. Hugh was very community minded and a vital member of the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce, holding many different offices through the years. He was just as active in the Gulfport Kiwanis Club.

The Campbells had come to Long Beach in 1936 and began their business. It recovered from the '47 Hurricane and by 1960 Ineta was a widow, running the tourist court alone.

Tyson and Florence Wilson ran the Sea Wall Motel and "Ty" as he was known, was also active in local affairs.

Once a Ticonderoga, New York family stopped in at the Sea Wall and began reading the current edition of the The Daily Herald, and were shocked to learn of the deaths of five personal friends, due to a fire in Ticonderoga, which had taken place at 3:30 am in New York. They read about in the Herald here at 4:00 p m.

The Holiday Shores began as a luxury motel with a \$500,000.00 investment. It was built in 1953 by Memphis builder, William D Jemison, and his sons. Jemison had lived in Gulfport some 40 odd years earlier and always said he "would be back."

The motel was one of the most striking in this area and touted flashing brass and handsome teak combined with modern furnishing

*Tourist Court to page 6*



City of Long Beach

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*Tourist Court from page 5*

in its airy lounge overlooking the Mississippi Sound.

White-coated porters assisted guests in unloading luggage and settling into rooms with thick wall-to-wall carpeting.

The grounds included party areas with barbecue pits. A pair of cruisers for deep-sea fishing was available as well as uniformed baby sitters and veterinarian-supervised kennel services for visiting pets.

The restaurant had an excellent chef and there was also a coffee shop with around-the-clock room service.

Colin "Kit" Carson and his wife, Mary, built Kit Carson's Camps on the corner of Island View and West Beach Blvd. in 1938 when they moved here from Michigan. They welcomed a son, Edward Linn, in 1941 and the three traveled back and forth frequently to Canada and Michigan to visit their parents.

Mary's name was seen in the paper mentioned in the same paragraphs with Rev Wharton of the Presbyterian Church where she was involved in activities.

During WWII, 10 members of a B-17 crew in training were killed when their plane crashed west of Lyman. Two of the wives were living at Kit Carson's at the time, and another at a neighboring tourist court here in Long Beach. Many of the courts each had a certain amount of regular tenants along with the vacationers.

The Carsons owned the property a little over ten years and sold to Lloyd F Clifford in 1950. He made extensive renovations which included all new appliances, and changed the name to Gulf Manor court, which was still in operation during the 1960's.

The Pine Lodge Motor Court was another popular court begun in 1949 by the Riddick and Henderson families. It was operated by Arco Hooker, who would later become mayor of the city. Featuring a restaurant, swimming pool and pier, the court was a favored and frequent site for meetings of local groups such as the Chamber of Commerce and others.

Jay and Ethel Monroe built the Monroe Cottages in 1926 on Mason Ave about a block from the beach. It was used during its early years as rental property for permanent residents but later during the advent of the tourist courts, it began advertising itself in that manner also. Rumor has it that John Dillinger once stayed there. Mr Monroe was quite active in community affairs, was the managing head of the south Mississippi Poultry Assn, and an officer in the Civic League of Long Beach.

Mrs. Monroe won many awards in the fair sometimes winning every category in the poultry section. After her husband's death, Mrs. Monroe continued on with their rental business.

The Gulf View Motel Court was one of the longest running businesses in the city. It was built in 1947 by

Gilbert and Elizabeth Simmons who operated it for many years. Nestled among a heavy canopy of dense trees, the cottages had all amenities and the grounds were always well kept.

The Simmons' were both from upstate Mississippi and she was quite active in First Baptist Church. The couple often hosted farewell and Christmas parties for their guests, many were snowbirds.

Information is extremely scarce on Compton and Irene Wilson who ran the Beach Court at 802 West Beach Blvd.

Dr & Mrs. Sidney Major on the West corner of Jeff Davis Ave moved to Long Beach in 1942 and opened their business, the Major Guest House, as they had previously in Gulfport. The newspaper showed frequent guests who were also served meals. A son of the Majors also lived here in the city.

Going back to the older hotels on the beach, The Brown Hotel was one of the earliest in town, built by the Brown brothers, just west of Nicholson Ave. It was later sold to J R & Nellie Nevers, who used it as their residence. After several years it was again operated as a hotel, The Live Oak, which was the name the Nevers family gave it as their residence.

Mrs. Charles P Angell, who owned and operated The Angel House, was also community minded and was known to host civic and other events at the hotel, as did her daughter, who ran the hotel after her death. One such event was

a benefit to improve "The Park" donated to Long Beach by the L&N Railroad. It was reported that several hundred citizens gathered on the front lawn of the hotel. There were dances and events to benefit the Humane Society, fund raising for the building of the South MS Industrial School, lawn parties for the King's Daughters, dances for the Ladies Woodmen Circle. In the summer, something was going on at the Angel House almost every weekend. The dancing took place in the parlor and dining rooms.

Sources:

- *Ancestry.com (Census and City Directories)*
- *Genealogybank.com (Articles from Coast & NOLA papers)*

### Condolences



Our heartfelt thoughts go out to member Monnie Little Shirley, whose father, Robert Eugene Little, age 98, recently passed, as did C A Russ, brother of member Sally Russ Boulay.

Our community has also lost two more WWII veterans, Harry Sneed, a fine friend and neighbor and Mrs. Shirley Ermine, a WAC. Marilyn Logan, a long time teacher in our school system, Norene Morton, Billy Phelps, Terry Legg, Mary Charlene Lizana, Dr John Stringer, Nestor Serra, Jr, Jim Wilson, Jr. and Cathy Giuffria Ayala.

### Thank You from Brenda Batey Cemetery Tour Chairman for 2016

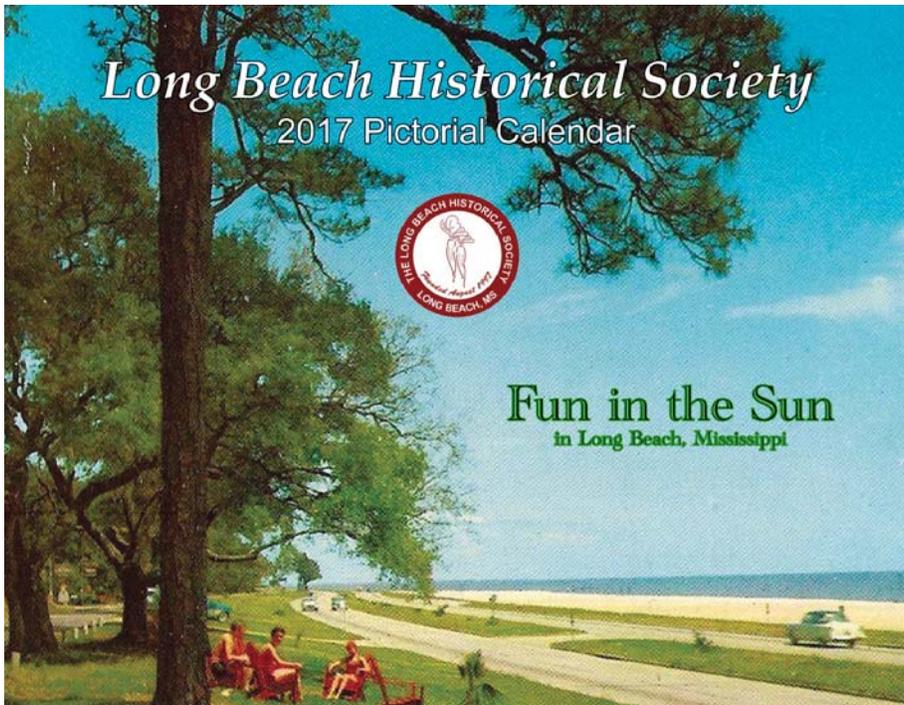
Once again, the goodness, generosity and enormous talents of our Long Beach citizenry were evidenced in the success of the Society's Fourth Cemetery Tour. Please note those who made it possible, and take the chance to thank them when you see them. For me, as Coordinator, I could not accomplish anything without them. Marilyn VanCourt and Beth Hansen began in March researching and preparing the scripts for the actors, visiting the cemetery as they plan, contacting potential actors to commit. Without scripts, no Tour! Without actors, no Tour!

There was no shortage of talent with our re-enactors! First, MARILYN VANCOURT is my co-chair. Besides scripts, she plots the order, handles the luminaries, collects and sets up the shepherd's hooks and lanterns, serves as Tour Guide, set-up, clean-up and everything in between. Invaluable this year as well were Pat and Russ Jones who assisted as Guides, set-up, and clean-up.

I also want to express enormous appreciation to the following actors in presentation order, with their character: BETH HANSEN as Joanna Vallet (who was Mrs. Harper McCaughan); RONALD SKELLIE as Salathiel Smith; MARK BRYANT as Harper McCaughan; BILLY SKELLIE as Walter Fabian; STEVEN MINK as Henry Dubuisson (his G Grand); and MARCIA FRENCH as Meta Hanville.

Also, Mary and Rebecca Scott were on hand to assist with set-up, exit table, and clean-up. Mary also advertised on her blog and on Facebook! Iantha Hines and Lee Anne Bryant were always there to help. Jeff Savarese, Tony VanCourt, Richard Scott on traffic control. And there with me helping in so many ways, KING BATEY! As well, the City Staff who were almost finished cleaning up when we arrived the morning after! And, we appreciate the delivery of guard rails from our Long Beach Police Dept.





One Member – One Calendar

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