

Long Beach Historical Society

Remembering the past to preserve our future

January 2018

President's Message

Hello,

Happy New Year,
Hope everyone is toasty warm now and the bad weather is behind us! The heater in the building malfunctioned, there was no heat, the temperature plummeted again and Eddie had a terrible case of the flu. The Board decided that it was best that we cancel the January meeting and I told Eddie to get well before even considering laying out and printing my newsletter.

Since then, the water line on the ice maker in our refrigerator has busted and I've had gout in my feet. It has not been a good winter, weather wise or health wise.

The awards luncheon and meeting has been rescheduled for Monday, March 19. Same time as always, 11 am.

We're hoping for better weather, even though it will be close to the April meeting. The January Awards meeting is more of a social for us

anyway, which everyone seems to enjoy, along with lunch, so plan to be with us.

One of my regrets for canceling is that you could not purchase your calendars in January. Since the sale of the calendars is the only fundraiser for the society, I hope everyone will consider purchasing one (of course, you may buy as many as you like, lol). Local members, please call me, and I or someone else will be happy to deliver. For our out of town members, purchases may be made through our website.

The second regret is that you could not pay your dues at the January meeting. Dues may also be paid online. Eddie and I pay ours that way every year, or you may send your check to our P O Box. Also, those of you who may be 90 years old, your membership is FREE! Just one small perk which the society offers. I also just thought of a new perk. When you reach 100, your calendar will also be free!

The society has been busy during the last quarter. The beautiful 2018 calendar, show casing Gulf Park College, has been well received. Allisa, Eddie, and I, worked on it again this

year, with Allisa choosing the pictures, which she has access to at USM. Thanks to Donald, Fran, and Brenda for working with us on the ads and others who worked in our booth at both local venues held on the Harper McCaughan Town Green. We participated in the Fall Festival hosted by the Carnival Association in November and Christmas on the Avenue, hosted by the Concert Choir in December. We not only sold calendars but also "Rosalie & Radishes, the History of Long Beach, MS", and picked up some new members along the way.

While we were selling the calendars, we also received compliments on our new tent. The new wrap-around banner on it was a hit. It is 40 feet long and about 15 inches high and wraps completely around the top of the tent. Eddie did a wonderful job designing it and I enjoyed giving him a little bit of input while watching him work. We are so proud that it accomplished just what we needed: high visibility!

The Twentieth Anniversary celebration, finally held in November, was enjoyed by all in attendance. It was a relaxing afternoon with folks looking at memorabilia from the early years of

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

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**Long Beach
Historical Society**

2017 Officers

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- Secretary – Allisa Beck
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- Eddie Ware

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Long Beach, MS 39560-0244

Physical Address

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.

2018 Meetings:

• **March 19 - 11:00 am (Awards)**

- April 16 - 6:00 pm
- July 16 - 6:00 pm
- October 16 - 6:00 pm

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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

President from page 1

the society and also at a vignette on the life of society founder, Mary Ellen Alexander. Looking back on the words of retiring presidents, Donald Dana, Mable Skellie and Nashie Ward, was also very enlightening.

Sadly, Nashie passed on Christmas Day, becoming the third former president now resting in peace, joining Mary Ellen and Art Holzweissig, who passed last August. Here are some words from Nashie's timely advice, for those who missed it. She was ending her presidency in 2005, the centennial year of our city, and thinking of the next hundred years. In her reflections she said, "We have many projects facing us for the advancement of Long Beach, while preserving the legacy of the past. Let us continue to grow, educate, participate, and enrich ourselves and those of our area." Very timely advice indeed.

In the twenty year life of the society, there have been 10 presidents. Only three of them, Mary Allen Alexander, Mable Skellie and Ashley Skellie are natives of Long Beach. (Some of us, however, have been in Long Beach most all of our lives.) Along those lines, of the eight current officers, only two are natives of the city, Eddie Ware and Bernie Parker. Possibly this trend continues in the membership. I think it is very refreshing and wonderful, that so many "newbies", so to speak, are involved with preserving this group and loving every minute of it. We have all adopted Long Beach

The city invited me to speak to the Mayor's Youth Council on Feb 28th about the history of the city. There are three members from each of the

four high school classes and several of them are descendants of some of the pioneers. I knew this in advance and was able to mention their connection. It was a nice group and they seemed to enjoy the presentation.

Sincerely
Beth Hansen,
President

Meeting News

Dan Ellis of Pass Christian kept us entertained at the October meeting, updating us on the Old Spanish Trail. He was very thoughtful and updated his presentation to include more pictures of our city in it. They were good ones and created dialogue among us. Mr. Ellis also suggested that we get involved in show casing Long Beach as part of the Old Spanish Trail movement, which sounds like a wonderful idea for us. It will involve the placement of banners in the city.

Cemetery Tour 2017

The Cemetery Tour was again enjoyed by all who came out. Thanks so much to Brenda Batey, the chair, and her assistant, Marilyn VanCourt. They do such a great job every year. Re-enactors this year were Clayton Pennylegion as Edgar Fillingim, Fran Wren as Emma Fulton, Beth Hansen as Sarah Hunt, Christine Thomas Butts, now of Louisiana, as her mother, Lone Thomas, and Mark Bryant as Douglas Donovan, also talking about Mrs. Donovan, the former Fannie Capers. Lee Anne always assists Mark with his presentations.

Significant points about each person of the past were listed in the October newsletter.

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Cemetery from page 2

Many people will stop and talk with the re-enactors about their connections to the people being portrayed. Some will say they didn't know some of the facts and were delighted to hear it. One woman said she knew there was a connection with one of the women to her family and was glad to have the answers to her questions. Makes it all worth it!

Brenda and Marilyn always come up with a great group, including their wonderful husbands, King and Tony, plus Pat and Billy Skellie, Marsha French, Mary and Becca Scott, Jeff Savarese, Pat and Russ Jones, and other friends and members who make the cemetery look really beautiful. This year they were helped by the Boy Scouts who did swift work and also seemed to enjoy all of the presentations, as well. We were delighted to see this group and are very appreciative of their efforts.

DUES

Dues were due every January, unless you recently paid or recently joined during the latter part of last year. Any new members who signed up at one of the festivals on the Town Green do not have to pay again at this time.

And, remember, when you reach your 90th birthday, dues become complimentary, which is a small perk of the society.

New Members

Welcome to new members, Shane and Rachel Pell Walker and Harold and Claire Peterson.

CONDOLENCES

We are mourning the loss of some wonderful society members who have recently passed on and offer our sympathies to their families.

Since space was limited in the last newsletter, here is some additional information on Art Holzweissig, who passed last August, and was affectionately known as "Mr. H". Art served as President from 2005-2007, a bleak few years!

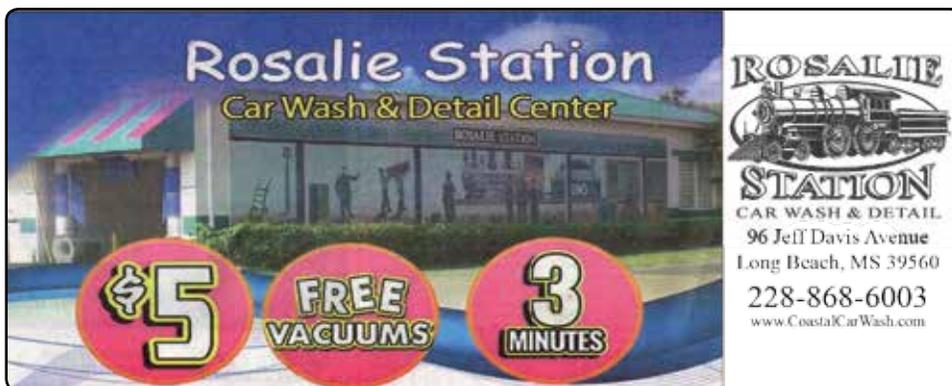
He came to the coast in 1977 with NASA and became involved with the Presbyterian Church, the Historical Society and scouting, following in his father's footsteps. Art was an Eagle Scout and would later be proud of the many scouts in Long Beach to also attain that rank, under his watch.

Mr."H", an elder, deacon, and scoutmaster, was also honored by his church for so many years of service and also by the city, when Mayor Robert Bass proclaimed Aug 20, 2000 as "Art Holzweissig Day." He would also receive other awards for his community involvement. Art left his wife Billie, her

5 children and 2 daughters from his first marriage. He is being missed by all.

Mary Nash Ward, known as "Nashie" to all, passed away on Christmas Day in Florida, where she had recently moved to be near her son and his family. A native of Jackson, Nashie moved to the coast many years ago from Illinois, when she and her husband retired. A former school teacher, she became active

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SMOKE FROM THE CHIMNEY'S

Condolences from page 3

in numerous coast activities, Feed My Sheep, Food Pantry, Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, Newcomers Club, and others. She was also involved in many ministries at St Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church and was President of the Long Beach Historical Society from 2003 – 2005.

Nashie leaves two sons and several grandchildren.

Linda Mignor, also a member of the society, passed away the day before Christmas. Linda was a former professor of nursing at USM, Gulf Park. In her retirement, she was also very involved in community service, volunteering with the Chamber of Commerce, American Heart Assn, Pink Hearts, Alzheimer's Assn, Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art and St Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, leading the Condolence Committee and assisting in the office.

Linda's husband of 46 years, Gene, passed in 2014. They leave a son, a daughter and 5 granddaughters.

Passing in October, 2 days before our last meeting was Betty Cropper, sister of Julia Arceneaux. She is also survived by another sister Mary, and a brother, Buddy Cropper.

Betty graduated from Long Beach High School in 1951 and was a talented artist, receiving her training at the Art Institute in Pittsburgh PA, and later working in that city. She worked in New Orleans for many years as a commercial Artist for Louisiana Power and Light. After retiring and moving to Diamondhead, Betty was also involved in the art community here on the Coast, and as a member of the Historical Society, she worked on some of the early library displays and did artwork for Mary Ellen in some of our newsletters. She did a sketch of one of the King brothers, who were both blacksmiths, one on Jeff Davis Ave and the other on 2nd St.

Betty was a member of Trinity Episcopal Church and St Monica's Guild.

Our community is also in mourning for beloved teacher, Connie Fennell Cole, who taught for 45 years at Long Beach High School. Connie was an active and vibrant member of our community. She loved her church, St Thomas Catholic, where she served in many capacities, most visibly as a lector and commentator. Connie leaves her husband, Chunky, 2 sons, Ryan and Chris, her sisters, Pam and Jackie and brothers, Billy and G. O.

All of these friends will be deeply missed. Recently, the area funeral homes have cut down on how long obituaries are kept up on their websites, so the long lists that have been in Smoke from the Chimneys will no longer appear, we're sorry to say. We will of course, always show something on our members.

Your support is needed for the Annual Society Fundraiser

**Buy the 2018 calendar or calendars at the meeting
History of Gulf Park College included**

\$10.00 Large

\$5.00 Small

SMOKE FROM THE CHIMNEY'S

Gulf Park College - 1921 – 1971



Col. J. C. Hardy, who had established Columbia Military University in Tennessee and Gulf Coast Military Academy in Gulfport had long thought of having a women's college on the coast. Coast cities were very interested in this prospect but the city of Long Beach showed the most progressive spirit. At a meeting of enthusiastic citizens, the group agreed to pledge \$25,000 to the cause. Col. Hardy was elated and invited Richard G Cox, to join him in the Gulf Park endeavor. Dr. Cox previously held professorships at Columbia and Drake and was presently the Dean at Ward-Belmont College in Nashville, also a women's college. He became the president of Gulf Park and Col. Hardy, the finance

manager. Other interested parties became stockholders and the group began searching for a good location.

Long Beach, the city which Col. Hardy chose in which to build his college, traces its roots back to 1788, when the first home was built. Known by four other names before being named Long Beach in 1882, by the latter part of the century it became THE farming center of the coast. Even though the city shipped most of the vegetables leaving the coast, and was known as the Radish Capital of America, it seemed to be lost in the shadow of Gulfport, a younger city to the east, which had grown pretty quickly, due to its harbor and railroads. Now, due to its own bold action, Long Beach would become home to an elite college for young women! Joy was in the air!



Property finally chosen on which to build was no doubt influenced by a tremendously huge and beautiful oak tree, in the prime of its life, and part of a canopy of other oaks, along with magnolias, pines, and others species too, not to mention a lovely small bayou running its way west. It's been said that at high noon, six hundred people could fit in the shadow of this tree. Former resident John J. McCaughan, an earlier, progressive Coast leader, who worked to have the University of Mississippi built on the coast, was also lured to this parcel of ground by these same factors in the mid 1800's. He built a home on the site and thereby became the first caretaker of the huge tree.

Col. Hardy wanted the college buildings to be of brick and planned in such a way that future growth additions would not detract from the overall beauty envisioned. He enlisted the services of Rathbone DeBuys, a prominent New Orleanian, as his architect. Mr. DeBuys designed and was in charge of the construction of Gulf Park. He and his wife came back and forth from NOLA, sometimes staying for weeks at a time.

In Sept. of 1919, after the plans were completed, artist renderings were put on display in a down town store front in Gulfport for all to see. The Spanish style main building of Gulf Park College would be three stories high, and constructed of brick covered with stucco, thus being fireproof. The dining room on the first floor would have a capacity of 400, a

SMOKE FROM THE CHIMNEY'S

kitchen to match and a gymnasium the same size as the dining room. Many other amenities were on this floor also. The second and third floors would contain 82 suites of rooms with a bath for each two rooms, and twelve rooms, each with its own bath, and large sun parlors.

The academic building was two hundred feet long and built of the same materials as the dormitory and refectory. It would contain the administration office, a four hundred seat capacity auditorium, nineteen classrooms, three laboratories; chemical, physical and home economics, a store room, and locker rooms for local students. It would be connected to the main building by a well-planned system of drives and attractive pergolas. Student reservations were received before construction even began. The targeted opening date for the college was to be fall of 1921. Ground was broken in January, 1920 on the main building. The wings on each end stretched toward the beach and at the end of each wing on each floor were huge sun parlors with eleven large windows. The roof was constructed for a roof garden, being sufficiently strong to allow for the student body to assemble on it for games, dancing or entertainments of any sort. Plans were made for the elevator to run to the roof.

When the college opened, exactly as projected, on Sept. 28, 1921, there were 146 girls registered. They came from twenty states, from Maryland to California and from Michigan to Florida.

The college was a busy place during that first term, with the girls learning and working very quickly. The first student recital was in October and in November, 100 girls were the featured entertainment at a Thanksgiving celebration at the Jefferson Davis Soldier's Home. They sang, played instruments, and gave recitations on the front porch of the mansion. In December, they were in a basketball match with Biloxi High School. Before heading home for the Christmas holidays, some of the northern girls went out front and took a swim in the Gulf.



In those early years, Gulf Park offered all four years of high school and the first two years of college but the first two years of high school were later discontinued. All the usual academics were offered and there was special emphasis on art, music, drama, and sports, such as horsemanship, water sports, archery, golf, basketball and volleyball. When Gulf Park opened for its 20th annual session in 1940, the enrollment came from 34 states and 4 foreign countries. The students were still being welcomed to campus by Dr. Richard G. Cox but Colonel Hardy had passed away several years after he founded the college.

With each decade, the campus amassed many memories and became rich in tradition that is still alive in the hearts of former students. Memories are sure to include the annual Caribbean Cruise, the Coast Club, the Jet Maskers, the Glee Club, The Sea Gull, the Tammy Howl and scores of others.

Although Gulf Park College operated successfully for 5 decades, it never quite recovered from the devastating effects of Hurricane Camille in 1969 and declining enrollment. Sadly, the time to close its doors came in 1971. Still thriving, the gorgeous property and lovely old buildings are now home to the University of Southern Mississippi, which opened in 1972 and thanks to the Long Beach Historical Society, there are 3 historical markers on campus, one which pays tribute to Gulf Park College.

Newsletter clippings from 100 years ago

Long Beach Stirred Over Practice Indulged in By Mischievous Boys

GULFPORT

A Gulfport physician received a hurry call to long beach a few days ago and when he reached the hard surfaced road near the turn ran his machine over tacks thrown upon it by mischievous boys and two punctured tires resulted. The delay thus occasioned covered more than an hour and the visit of the physician finally had to be made on an electric car. Fortunately he was able after all to save the life of a mother and child. Residents along the coast are very much stirred up over the devilish practice of the boys throwing tacks over the highway in Long Beach and if they are ever found will be made to feel the severiest penalty of the law whether they are old or young. The tacks used are of the larger size and are calculated to do great harm to automobiles.

Other complaints have been made by autoists who have also suffered from tire troubles resulting from tack punctures.

LONG BEACH BENEFITS FROM RAIN

The rain at Long Beach last night was worth thousands of dollars to the old corn and sugar cane crops in that section, said L. K. Hill this morning. The rain was sufficient for all needs and saved the crops mentioned from ruin, or a great shortage at least. Mr. Hill is one of the larger farmers in that section and expects to make 2000 gallons of syrup, but he is apprehensive about being able to get tin cans in which to put it. He considers packing a good home made syrup in barrels as lowering its quality.

Store of A. A. Gause Again Rifled By Burglars Who Succeeded In Making Large Haul.

GULFPORT

The dry goods store of A. A. Gause and the grocery store of D. L. Hays, both located in Long Beach, were visited by burglars last night who made a rich haul. This is the second visit made by burglars to the Gause store within the past two weeks, but the loss the first time was inconsequential compared with the looting of last night. Evidently the burglars were provided with a wagon or some other vehicle, as the merchandise taken could not well have been carried away without it. Between 35 and 40 pairs of shoes alone were missing from the shelves when Mr. Gause entered his place of business this morning, besides suits of clothes and other merchandise.

At Mr. Hays store only a few groceries were taken and the little money he left in the cash register, but he seemed to view his losses as a trifle when questioned over the phone this morning.

Long Beach offers a rich field to burglars since the stores are all isolated from the residential section, and there are no patrolmen on duty at night.

LONG BEACH BOY ARRIVES IN FRANCE

News has been received at Long Beach by Mrs. F. L. Taquino that her son, Corporal Douglas Taquino, has arrived in France. Douglas, although but 18 years old, was one of Capt. Smith's first volunteers. He left with Company G last August for Jackson where later he was transferred to Camp Beauregard and became a member of 142nd M. G. Bat., Co. D.

LABOR SHORTAGE AT LONG BEACH

Loss of Food Stuff Will be Great
Unless Men Can Be Secured
at Once to Gather Crops

GULFPORT

The crops at Long Beach have more than come up to the expectations of the truck growers and give promise of satisfactory returns but a condition has developed that has brought no little uneasiness to the truckers.

"We have the crops," say the farmers, "and we have the market and satisfactory prices, but there is an alarming scarcity of labor to gather the crops. We have advertised for men and we have made offers of good pay, but thus far we have had no response to our calls. The crops will not wait and unless we are able to get the needed help right away our loss will be a great one."

The Long Beach farmers have not overdrawn the problem which confronts them. Their crops have to be moved right quickly and unless they succeed in getting labor enough serious losses will surely overtake them.

Should there be any idle men at all in this vicinity they would do well to report at once to Long Beach, and place their services at the disposal of the farmers. The cry throughout the United States is for more food. In fact, those in authority say food will help to win the war. Therefore, all who can do so should hasten in the Long Beach truck region and help save the crops.

LONG BEACH DID HERSELF PROUD

Added Materially To the Success of
the Liberty Bond Parade
On Wednesday.

GULFPORT

Long Beach added materially to the success of the Liberty Bond parade on Wednesday, furnishing a number of well decorated autos and an interesting float. This was contributed by the Long Beach auxiliary of Red Cross and elicited much favorable comment. The auto truck was tastefully decorated in the national colors and flew the Stars and Stripes from one end and the Red Cross flags at the other. A large Red Cross banner covered the end of the truck.

The center figure was a wounded soldier with bandaged head lying on a regulation army cot. At each side sat a Red Cross nurse in attendance. At the four corners of the float were four lovely young women in Red Cross costume knitting, sewing on hospital garments or working on surgical dressings, showing the different departments of the work.

LONG BEACH SOLDIER WOUNDED

Ed Zimmer, a Long Beach soldier who took part in the Chateau Thierry fight is now at Washington recovering from a wound which he received.

Mr. Zimmer's parents were notified of his wound but its character was not disclosed.

Young Zimmer now writes that the shot struck him in the lower leg, shattering his shin bone. Just as soon as his condition will permit, he will be sent back home.