



Long Beach Historical Society

Remembering the past to preserve our future

April 2018

President's Message

Happy Spring to everyone! It probably seems strange getting another issue of Smoke from the Chimneys so quickly. Having two meetings within a month is unusual for us but Mother Nature was dictating our every move during the cold winter. Let us pray that winter is gone now and we won't have to alternate between shorts with flip flops one day and coats the next. Well, all except Eddie, he wears shorts all year long! The long pants in his closet are all accompanied by a coat and tie.

The Awards Luncheon program is always a pleasure. The 2017 recipients, Billy Skellie, for the Mary Ellen Alexander Lifetime Achievement Award and Eddie Ware for the Harper McCaughan were both surprised and happy with their well-deserved awards. Billy is always ready to pass along some history and Eddie is such a

loyal member. We're blessed to have both of them.

Genie Fillingim Hendry was sick last month but will receive her Friend of the Society Award this month.

Thanks to Pat Skellie and her crew for the fabulous refreshments. Ashley was in the group, Pat Jones and others also. Brenda, we all hope you are feeling better and can be with us this month!

It's been a quiet quarter for the society but with good weather coming along, we can all get back in the groove.

Sincerely,

Beth Hansen,
President

Upcoming Program

We had some really good speakers and subject matter at some of our recent meetings that we all seemed to enjoy. Tom Simmons's book about the black aviator from Gulfport is a great read, by the way.

We haven't had an in house program since last summer, on our men who did not return home from various wars. The end of the upcoming school year and some other factors also, have prompted some interest in our school plant on Cleveland Avenue. This program contains new material and data and will be interesting and enjoyable to all.

Trivia question

Which group was given a donation to buy a very large piece of property in Long Beach?

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

Beth Hansen: Editor
228-864-6100

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**Long Beach
Historical Society**

2017 Officers

- President – Beth Hansen
- Vice-President –
- Secretary – Allisa Beck
- Treasurer – Pat Skellie
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- Iantha Hines
- Bernie Parker
- Eddie Ware

Mailing Address:

P. O. Box 244
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 15 - 6:00 pm

Email Address:

lbhistoricalsociety@lbhistoricalsociety.com

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

Quarterly Feature Story

Some early blooming flowers in the dead of this dreadful winter as well as advertisements in old newspapers brought gladiolus to mind. Some research soon brought up the name of Mary McRee, who moved here with her husband James. She had an extensive gladiolus business in Tennessee and was successful in selling her glads to the big hotels in New Orleans. She was amazed with our southern locale which permitted an earlier growing season. Research showed some of her first glads were growing on the farm of W. J. Quarles, about four acres to be exact, in 1921.

In 1927, they also advertised tulips and winter lawn grass seed. Their business was known as the McRee Flower Farm.

Mrs. McRee was a successful florist before moving to Long Beach and she and her husband purchased land on the east corner of Trautman Avenue and West Beach Blvd that was 191 feet wide. Part of the property extended north for 1,170 feet. Apparently the glads were growing on this land too.

At one time, the McRee home was being rented out for the summer season. Eventually this land was sold for \$8,000.00 to a

buyer who quickly turned it over for \$11,000 to a New Orleans buyer.

During this same period in time, there were several successful gladioli farmers in Harrison County, one being Judge H Colmer, at Howison. He sometimes brought some of his specimens to the Daily Herald office. There was also a Kennison Gladioli Farm, near Lyman and H. J. Greiner had a twelve acre farm garden in Poplar Head and was known to ship large quantities of gladioli each year to Chicago and other markets in good condition.

From 50-100 boxes of these blooms per day were also shipped from Saucier to northern points.

Continuing on in our little town, it has produced not only great vegetable farmers but many flower farmers through the years, some natives and some who moved here just for our growing conditions.

Giving us fame to claim was the Gladioli Farm here in Long Beach that came to be on the former G Carrubba property. This property contained 100 acres of farmland and was purchased and developed by Miss Blanche

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Beard, a florist, in the 1930's. It next went to John Sinclair. Miss Beard stayed on during that tenure.

In 1941 Sinclair said he was shipping close to a million blooms each year to points as far as New York, Denver, Philadelphia and Detroit. His opinion was that any dirt farmer can raise Gladioli but the difficulty lies in marketing the crop without taking too large a loss.

Eventually Sinclair sold the property to Clarence Thomas and William Norris in 1945, who both moved here from Idaho. Mr. Thomas had been a practicing attorney for 30 years, while Mr. Norris was a potato producer. Mr. Thomas and wife, Ione, operated the Glad Farm together until his untimely death in 1952, at the age of 59. Also surviving Mr. Thomas here in Long Beach, were three of his children, Christine, Dick, and Bobby.

After her husband's death, Mrs. Thomas took a government job at the Gulfport Seabee Base and during that time, she was secretary to five commanding officers. She retired in 1970 with plans to catch up on her hobbies and to do some traveling, which she did. She later passed away on April 3, 1996.

Christine Thomas Butts, a member of the society and a 1961 graduate of Long Beach High School, was contacted about the society presenting her mother on the yearly Cemetery Tour in 2017. She consented to come and portray her mother for us, which is always a joy when family wants to participate.

For those of you who couldn't be at the tour last year, the following is an article, written by Ray Thompson in 1957 for his Daily Herald column, KNOW YOUR COAST about Mrs. Thomas and the Glad Farm.

Turn off the Beach Drive at Cleveland Avenue in Long Beach, keep right on going across the railroad tracks and you'll run head on into Glad Farm, where three separate enterprises work happily together.

No, that's not why it is called Glad Farm. For many years local residents up and down the Coast have been making a beaten path to its door for that exquisite flower with the sword shaped leaves and spikes of varicolored blooms - the gladiolus. Hence the name "Glad Farm."

Just a little over a year ago it also became the Glad Farm Riding Stables under the management of Egon de Kamarasay, European

ex-diplomat. Professor of History, Geography and Government at Gulf Park College during the school year, and now conducting a 6000 mile tour through the countries of Europe.

And just a few weeks ago Glad Farm also became the Glad Farm Day Camp for children, under the supervision of Mrs. Curt Dutton assisted by Miss Diane Creel, Mrs. Egon Kamarsay and Miss Bonney Gladney.

Let's take up these enterprises in order.

You've heard of a one man business. Well, Glad Farm, per se, is a one woman business. Since her husband died six years ago, the Glad Farm has been Mrs. Ione B Thomas. It isn't a nursery and she isn't a florist because, except on rare occasions when she handles chrysanthemums, gladiolas are her entire stock in trade. But in her 12' x 24' walk-in freezer you'll find five or six varieties of each color—predominantly yellows, reds, lavender, pink and white. In

Trivia question

Who was the first person in the city to sell and ship shelled pecans?

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SMOKE FROM THE CHIMNEY'S

Feature from page 3

fact Glad Farm is not only a one woman business but a part time operation of that one woman. Actually she been working at the Navy Base four years. But so loyal are her customers that they come after 3:30 in the afternoon when the kids are home and can fill orders. It is all cash and carry, no delivery service and her advertising is an occasional runner in the paper. But they come from far and near -- glad to get Glad Farm glads at the standard price – as is obvious, Mrs. Thomas handles the finest gladiolas the Coast can offer.

Then not quite a year ago in strolled Egon Kamarasy, a teacher at Gulf Park College and member of the Pass Christian Polo Club, looking for a place to keep his string of horses. His appraising eye soon discovered the possibilities of the unused acres of Glad Farm—and soon the Glad Farm Riding Stables were born—with its dressage arena, a polo practice field, and a ring for training both horses and riders. Its first Horse Show this spring attracted nearly 700 people including exhibits of jumping and horsemanship by the top riders of the Coast and New Orleans area. There are seven horses available for riding at the Glad Farm stables now and in Mr. Kamarasy's absence

on the European tour, Miss Bonney Gladney operates the Glad Farm stable with a horse rental program, a scout program, an Equitation program and of course, the Day Camp program.

That Day Camp idea just jelled a few weeks ago. What more ideal than this sweep of farmland for children from 5 to 15 years old, especially when horseback riding right on the grounds is part of the program, swimming at nearby Holiday Inn Pool by special arrangement, plus scavenger hunts, hikes, crafts and games and cookout.

And so there they are—three successful and growing enterprises working together—with gladiola lovers, riding

devotees and parents looking for a nearby day camp for their children, day or week, all glad that Glad Farm exists.

Source: *Genealogybank.com* (for *Daily Herald* articles)

The names of the sons of Mrs. Thomas, Dickey and Bobby, were frequently seen in the news, taking part in the horse shows at the Glad Farm Riding Stables.

Of course, we all know that Mrs. Thomas sold twenty acres of her land to the city for the 1959 school, the stadium and the Junior high. This was a wise move for her and for the city, which was sorely in need of a new plant.



Chris Thomas Butts portraying her mother at 2017 cemetery tour

Condolences

Long Beach is saddened by the recent death of Kendall Pell, Jr, former Police Chief and son of the late Jeritza Pell.

Ken, was a good man and known for finding humor in everyday life, while serving the citizens of Long Beach for 27 years. He leaves his wife Becky and a large family.

Our thoughts are also with the families of Myrna Jordan and Penny Cobb, both longtime educators, Drenda Holifield, Marilyn Nations, Austin Barker, Ryan Hall, Jackie Branch, Joe Moore, Peggy Ritter, Andrew "Mullet" Cospelich, Lide Barrett, Norma Jean Collins, and W. C. Fowler, Steve Hicks, Bruce Schepens, Effie Violanti, Leola Alexander, and Woodrow Ladner. *(Leola and Woodrow were siblings. There were 15 of them and only 1 girl is left now.)*



Happy Birthday to Claire Boggs Morrison, known as "Tootie" in her family. Mrs. Morrison's 103rd birthday is April 12. She was born in 1915 and she and her husband, Stanley were the parents of a large family of seven, the oldest being twins. The oldest daughter, Florette, also has twins, as does another son, Bill, who is not a twin.

Trivia question

Which one of our mayors served in the Civil War?



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CAR WASH & DETAIL
96 Jeff Davis Avenue
Long Beach, MS 39560
228-868-6003
www.CoastalCarWash.com

ATTENTION
Dues were due in
January

This could be your
last newsletter!

Check the Expiration
Date under your
address, if it is prior
to 12/31/2018 your
dues are past due and
this will be your last
newsletter!

Membership is from January 1 until December 31. We offer three types of membership:

1. Individual \$15.00
2. Family \$20.00
3. Student \$5.00

Mail check too:
Long Beach Historical Society
P. O. Box 244
Long Beach, MS 39560

You can also pay online:
www.lbhistoricalsociety.org

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

Newspaper Adds from the past

Camellias, Azaleas, Roses, Evergreens,
General Nursery Stock
\$2.00 SPECIAL
Blooming size Camellias plants
Including Pink Perfection, Jarvis Red,
Corrine Fonde, Bella Romana,
Elizabeth, Brown's Red, Prof. Sargent,
Sarah Frost, and others.
LARY'S NURSERY
W. Beach Phone 1206-J
Long Beach, Miss.

Daily Herald 1948

Special for Beach Beautification Week

Louis Phillippe Francisca Kruger Eugene Martlett	Roses at 25c each Large Plants in Bloom
--	---

Montbretias at \$1.00 per 100.

See Our Bedding Plants When You Call.

Lilydale Nursery
LONG BEACH, MISS.

Daily Herald 1930

**LILYDALE SPECIAL
THIS WEEK ONLY.**

SMALL ROSE BUSHES,
Best Varieties, each **25c**

This is a good time to plant such Shrubs as Abelia
Grandiflora, Arbor Vitae, Ligustrum, Pittosporum,
Buddonia, Oleanders, Spiraea and Crepe Myrtle.

During February we will give Montbretia Bulbs or Plant
Tubs FREE with each purchase of \$2.50 or more.

LILYDALE NURSERY

J. W. ALLEN LONG BEACH M. B. ALLEN

Daily Herald 1928

GLADS GLADS GLADS

LOADS OF BEAUTIFUL FRESH
COLORS AND WHITE at Doz. **\$2.00**

Special 2 For 1 Sale

2-dozen of our beautiful, fresh \$1.50 per dozen glads for

\$1.50

Large Glad Bulbs For Sale.

We will give you some extras of these too.

GLAD FARM

MR. AND MRS. C. W. THOMAS, OWNERS

Phone 1362, Railroad Street, Long Beach.

Daily Herald 1950

