

Smoke From The Chimneys



Long Beach Historical Society

Remembering the past to preserve our future

April 2015

President's Message

Change is in the air along with this beautiful spring weather. Since the last newsletter, Donald Dana resigned the presidency due to serious health issues. I filled in for him at the January meeting and in February he submitted a resignation, so I am now your new president

Happily, Donald is showing much improvement and we all wish him well. After his first stint as President and Calendar Chair he also held office in the state historical society before stepping up to the presidency a second time with us when there was a need back in 2013. Thank you for your service Donald. It's much appreciated.

I've been feeling like the perennial vice president so it's time for me to move on to new challenges, which I now relish, although I didn't think I was ready last year but this is a new year! Hopefully I have learned enough from my predecessors to carry on their tradition.

My mother, the late Aline Doherty, whom the Long Beach Citizen of the Year Award is named for, never

shied away from the presidency of any organization that she belonged to, so it must be time for me to uphold the family tradition. Not long ago, I found a picture of Mom in an old edition of the Long Beach Weekly. She had won an award for signing up 50 members, that's right, 50, in a local civic club. I'll have to run fast to keep up with that feat and I learned two facts from it. One is the large number of those being signed up and the second is that a prize was offered for it. Hmmmm, maybe we should offer a prize!

After talking about our proposed library since moving into the building, we plan on opening it possibly during the summer. We will never be in competition with our home town library by any stretch of the imagination but we do want to accumulate items that will be of interest. I envision us being open for a few hours weekly with two people on duty together. In addition to our scrapbooks we also have a small collection of class, team and other pictures, pamphlets, family stories and miscellaneous items that have been given to us and in the beginning we will be using the open hours to add to the collection.

This may also be a way to attract new members. Once folks realize that we're open on a weekly basis, they may be inspired to bring in pictures, clippings or news items to share with us. At that point we can copy or scan the items on the spot for them. If they just drop by to see what's going on in our building, they may want to be a part of it.

We were honored to receive the 1938 football sweater of Jimmy Fillingim donated by his daughter Jeanne Hendry and also a mantle cloth and a piano cloth donated by Joyce Prestwood Ray. The handmade cloths were made before the turn of the 20th century by a member of the R L Inglis family. Special display boxes are required to keep fabric fibers intact but regrettably a lack of space will prohibit us from accepting any more such items at the present time.

I'm really looking forward to the rest of the year and working with all of you! Thanks in advance for your patience as I embark on this new chapter in my life.

Sincerely,
Beth Hansen
President

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

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**Long Beach
Historical Society**

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Meetings will all be held on the THIRD Mondays except the Awards/Soup Luncheon will be held at the Methodist Church. all other at Historical Society Building, 645 Klondyke Rd.

2015 Meetings:

- **January 19, 11:00 AM (Awards/Soup Luncheon at the Methodist Church)**
- March 16
- **May 18 - 6:00 pm**
- July 20 - 6:00 pm
- September 21 - 6:00 pm
- November 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

**January Meeting
& Awards Ceremony**

It gave us great pleasure to present our 2014 Awards at the January meeting held at the Methodist Church. Murella Powell was recipient of the coveted Mary Ellen Alexander Award for the year. Mrs. Powell, noted local historian, espouses all of the qualities that we look for in the winner of this award. During her long career with the Historical and Genealogical Dept of the Biloxi library she worked tirelessly to amass over 6,000 volumes, 2,000 roles of microfilm as well as other collections for use by all. She was surprised and said she didn't think she'd ever win anymore awards now that she is retired. However, we can still enjoy her work in the Flashback column that she does for the Sun Herald.

The Harper McCaughan humanitarian award was presented this year to JoAn Nicely, who knows from personal experience the challenge of cancer and has dedicated her life to helping others. With her Pink Heart Funds program she has provided over 2600 women with cranial prosthetics over the years. JoAn is a lovely young woman who was touched by the award and graciously shared some of her personal experiences with us.

A Friend of the Society Award went to Supervisor Marlin Ladner who has been a supervisor for over 16 years now and is a big proponent of community involvement. We're very happy that he responded to our call for help with a sign in front of our building.

A Friend Award also went to

member Mary Levens, our treasurer. She revived the Cemetery Tour program that she also began several years ago. It was a success!

Congratulations to of all of the award winners.

At the meeting, our speaker was Dr Pat Smith, retired Professor of History at USM, who spoke to us about his book, Hurricane Katrina: The Mississippi Story. He presented some interesting snippets from the book, which is excellent, by the way!

**March Meeting and Program and
Upcoming Meeting**

March saw the first of our two additional meetings for the year and we were all thoroughly entertained by the program of Dr Trevor Smith of MGCCC on Bananas. He is a dynamic speaker and presented us with many new banana facts that we've never thought about. We thought we were in the know because of our port and all of those Chiquita trucks and facts but it was very interesting to learn about the companies, the men who run them, and the men who actually grow and harvest the crops. Oh, and eat more bananas, they're great for you!

In the name of trying something different, there will not be a speaker for the May 18th meeting. That time may instead be used to look at and talk about the pictures, peruse our scrap books and check out the library room and the building in general. It is meant to be a relaxing time for socializing with others while observing the surroundings. New

picture displays have been hung since the last meeting. All of our calendar fronts have been framed, we've started a War Wall and soon the Historical Markers will be up on the walls also.

In Appreciation

Thanks to all who helped to make the Soup Luncheon a success, Brenda & King Batey, Mary Levens, Beth & Danny Hansen, lantha Hines, Charlotte Timmons, Pat Skellie, Alissa Beck, June O'Neal, Mike & Fran Wren, Gary Ponthieux, Bobby Patenotte and anyone else inadvertently left out.

Thanks also to the hostesses for the March meeting, Ola Mae Dana and lantha Hines. Everything was scrumptious ladies!

Reminiscing about the Railroad

The railroad tracks running right through the middle of every town all along the coast may seem like a curse as each train rumbles by at all hours of the day and night. (The one about 1:30 a m is particularly annoying) Of course, we know that we benefit greatly from the valuable goods and services that are eventually produced from the noisy intrusion. We should probably thank our lucky stars that there are so many smart people in this world. Where would we be without the wheel? Once it was invented, everything else just rolled into place including the locomotive.

The ancient Greeks had some sort of cart system in use back in 650 B C. It didn't have tracks but moved on ruts cut into the earth in such a way that the cars were forced to follow along, very similar to a

track system. Minds with greatness never stopped working and several centuries later, mine transportation was the inspiration for hand propelled cars in Germany and in the U K.

In the early 1600's a wagonway was recorded in England and shortly thereafter railways appeared but it wasn't until later in the 1700's that a stationary steam engine was built. The power was slow, only about 6-8 miles per hour but the movement was there.

By 1803 the English created the first public railway which was used for transporting goods. There was a lot of trial and error, as with anything new, and most of the progress centered around moving coal but passengers were also recorded on trains over there as early as 1807. Just a few years later, in 1812, the first commercial passenger railway was open. Granted, it was primitive and didn't carry many passengers but it was the beginning.

Improvements continued on in England and in this country too, and when the first railway opened here in America, it was powered by horses. This was in Quincy, Massachusetts on Oct 7, 1826. This commercial railway was needed to haul the granite being used in the construction of the famous Bunker Hill Monument, a 221 foot obelisk, which commemorates the first major battle between the British and the Patriot forces in the American Revolutionary War fought there on June 17, 1775. (Two pieces of history being made on the same spot!)

In the following years, as railroad companies opened here in America several of the first engines were ordered from England until our own factories sprang up for this purpose.

The Baltimore and Ohio would be the first railroad chartered in the United States. Much jubilation took place on that day, July 4, 1828, with lots of fanfare and parades. To add to the excitement the first spade of earth was turned over by the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, 91 year old Charles Carroll. The B & O railroad is remembered as the nation's first common carrier; it was expected to haul anything within reason, as requested.

In 1830 the South Carolina Canal and Railroad Company was also formed. It used the first steam locomotive built for sale in the U S at the West Point Foundry in New York City.

Hard to believe but opposition to the railroads was rife during those early days. Turnpike operators, canal and stagecoach companies, wagon drivers, even tavern owners and innkeepers all opposed this much needed progress. Some folks even claimed the railroads were a "device of the devil" and claimed that train travel may cause a "concussion of the brain". However, as we know, this stupidity and opposition didn't stop progress. Even though violence reared its ugly head during the process, railroad mania still set in after the steam locomotives had proven themselves. It didn't take long for people to realize that a

Railroad to page 4

Railroad From Page 3

3 day steamboat ride could be accomplished in 16 hours on a train.

Other lines sprang up all around the country and by 1840 the states east of the Mississippi River had over 2,800 miles of track and by 1850 that figure tripled to over 9,000 miles. The result, however, was miles of disconnected track, prohibiting straight through travel and much of it was not regulated by the government. To add further problems, all of the track laid was not the same gauge. Lessons were learned and in time these problems were all corrected.

A big boon to the country was the completion of the transcontinental railroad. On July 1, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed into law the creation of the Pacific Railway Bill which allowed train travel from coast to coast across the U S. Not long after the Civil War, plans again materialized to continue building railroads and of course with the idea to connect them. The Chattanooga Railroad, which already had roads in use with trains going into both New Orleans and Mobile made plans to connect those two cities.

By this time, two train robberies had already taken place. On May 5, 1865 robbers tore up the tracks beyond Cincinnati in order to derail a train and more than 100 passengers were robbed at gunpoint of cash and jewelry. The robbers were never caught. On October 6, 1866, thieves boarded a train near Seymour, Indiana and robbed the Adams Express car and also made an easy getaway.

News of the robberies did not deter the plans afoot to build this new line through Mississippi. New Orleans, the Crescent City, and Mobile, called the Gulf City, were both excited about the prospect and much was printed about it in the newspapers. For reasons that we Mississippians have come to accept, whether we like it or not, the name of our great state was hardly mentioned in all of this news. (Wow, how could they connect without passing through our tiny towns?) Granted, in 1870, there was not a large population on the Mississippi

Coast, but more than one would think. The former leading cities of Mississippi City, Handsboro and others later made defunct due to the rising of Gulfport, all had more

residents than did Long Beach, which of course, had not yet attained its Radish Capital status. Handsboro even had a newspaper, the Handsboro Democrat, and often times, the Times Picayune picked up its news and printed it.

Apparently the new railroad may have led the New Orleanians to our area for their weekly relaxation. Possibly passing through on their way to Mobile for whatever reason, they had to endure many stops at every little station in Mississippi. The Handsboro Democrat printed a complete listing of the names

of every stop and the distance between each. This list is quite long and contains names that most of us may not be familiar with. After the train left Mobile, it stopped 16 times before reaching Biloxi and 20 more times after that before reaching New Orleans. After Biloxi, the next stops are Soria, Harrison's, Mississippi City, Champlin's, Scott's, Miltenberger's, Pass Christian, Henderson's, Montgomery, Claiborne's, Toulmes, Look Out, Rigolets, Chef Menteur, Michaud, Lee, Gentilly, Junction and NOLA.



Before completion of the railroad, residents of New Orleans were invited to take a sneak peek tour to the outskirts of their own city after the rails had progressed enough to allow it. They weren't even familiar with the swampy area leading over to the Rigolets bridge, etc. and the trip was enjoyed by all who were no doubt fascinated by this new mode of transportation.

On the actual opening day of the New Orleans, Mobile and Chattanooga Railroad, a New Orleans passenger train and one

from Mobile met on Oct 28, 1870 for the Gold and Silver Spike Ceremony four miles west of the Rigolets bridge where an unfinished gap was closed by the installation of an eight foot rail. Both trains then sped into the city for some real celebrating amid the invited dignitaries.

To quote Rosalie and Radishes, *"This rail connection between Mobile and New Orleans was the beginning of a new era of prosperity for the Mississippi Gulf Coast and particularly for our community. Passenger and freight services were opened, and trains replaced the steamers as the means of transportation in the area, though the steamers continued to haul freight for a time."*

The railroad was also quite convenient for the newcomers moving into our area. The residents could arrive on one train and their livestock and furniture on another. No doubt our population increased dramatically.

One can just imagine how the Louisiana travelers felt when stepping off the train at Scott's Station for the first time and walking down to the shore. Scott Avenue, which would later become Girard Ave, was the only road between Menge Ave in Pass Christian and Texas St in Mississippi City that was cleared from the railroad to the beach in 1870.

As time went on, the locals on the coast began to rent out rooms in their beach homes and residents from New Orleans and other areas happily caught trains over to spend this leisure time.

The name of the railroad changed

during the first year from New Orleans, Mobile & Chattanooga to New Orleans, Mobile & Texas Railroad, which was eventually lost in foreclosure. At that time, the line was purchased by the Louis & Nashville, which was in 1881. Later L & N would merge with Seaboard Coast Line to form the Seaboard System in 1982 but more merging took place into the present CSX.

Information taken from

- ushistory.org
- American-rails.com
- northbendohio.org
- genealogybank.com
- *Rosalie & Radishes*

Family Stories

Please consider submitting some information about your family for us to keep on file in our library for future generations. So far we have 5 which include Monnie Little Shirley, June Bosarge O'Neal, Jennie McCaughan Lacy, Eddie Ware, and Beth Bourg Hansen. If any of you are holding off because you think you need more information or aren't sure about something, go ahead and write it, you may revise it at any time.

Here is the beginning of Eddie's story and we hope that you get some ideas from it.

My name is Edwin Ray Ware and I serve on the Board of Directors of the Historical Society. I'm the son of Ernest Edwin Ware and Mamie Ray. I have many Ware and Ray relatives plus many others here in Long Beach. I am married to Susan Curtiss, who descends from the Necaise family, a pioneer family on the coast which has much

genealogical information available in various local facilities.

My genealogy is still a work in progress but it appears that my GG grandfather, Francis A Ware was born in Virginia about 1811. His family, like many others, began a westward path across the U S and then took a southerly course and ended up in north Mississippi in Starkville, which is in Oktibbeha county. Many Wares are buried in cemeteries in that area.

My great grandfather, James F "Jim" Ware was born in north Mississippi about 1851 but I don't know much about my great grandmother, Emma, except that she was a native of Texas. Jim apparently went to Texas where he met and married his bride who gave birth to several children there, including my grandfather, Olan David Ware in 1885. Jim would later bring his wife and children to Mississippi where they resided in Starkville and also West Point, in Clay county. The couple also had a few more children here in Mississippi.

As a sixteen year old, my grandfather, Olan David, was still living upstate in the 1900 census. He moved to south Mississippi over a hundred years ago, where he met and married my grandmother, Lucinda Creel, a local Harrison county girl, in 1906. I have many Creel relatives in Biloxi, Gulfport and Long Beach areas.

My father, Ernest, was born north of the old Handsboro and Mississippi City areas in a little spot once called Epico. According to many old

Family stories to Page 6

Family stories From Page 5

newspaper clippings, it was a busy little place that had its own column in the old Daily Herald newspaper. I have many news clippings from the old days when newspapers still reported on who was visiting who on Sunday afternoons, who was having a picnic along Bayou Bernard and all sorts of other small town events that allows one to keep tabs on their families so long ago. It also fosters an appreciation for a simple way of life

My maternal side had roots in Choctaw county and also in Georgia where my great grandfather, Clinton Ray, was born around 1845. His wife Margaret, was born here in Mississippi. Their son, James Lee Ray, married Minnie Mae Hollis and they became the parents of my mother, Mamie Ray.

More from Eddie later!!!!!!!

Birthday Celebration

Fabulous news around our town is the 100th birthday of the senior member of the society, Mrs. Claire Boggs Morrison, a descendant of pioneers of the city. Miz Claire was given a fine celebration by her family that was enjoyed by all. Afternoon Mass was said on the grounds of the Boggs Compound by one of her grandsons, Father Jimmy Morrison, among her family and friends. A lovely afternoon that was enjoyed by all.

Happy Birthday

Mrs. Morrison!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**Condolences**

We are very saddened by the death of Jack Mincher, a native son of Long Beach. He passed away in February after our last newsletter. Although a resident of Louisiana, Jack, Lt Colonel, U S Army Retired, was buried here on the coast at the Biloxi National Cemetery. A retired geologist and WWII veteran, Jack was happy to be home for the latest dedication of the WWII Memorial on the Town Green in 2012 and even happier that the memorial is now standing on the same grounds where he graduated from high school. He was the last surviving brother of four who served during WWII and he served under General George Patton, crossing the English Channel with Patton's Third Army. He fought at Omaha Beach in Normandy, France, and later crossed the Rhine into Germany. Once while showering in an abandoned German facility he heard a singer's voice coming from another stall. He was sure the voice belonged to someone he knew so he followed it to Thomas Meek, a classmate and choir mate from Long Beach High School.

Jack is survived by his wife, a daughter, 2 sons and five grandchildren. 1922-2015.

We also received word of the death last December of Dr Walter Porter, another Long Beach native, who went on to graduate from Mississippi State and the University of Wisconsin for his PHD. He retired as Professor Emeritus of Agronomy at State and had also worked for LSU.

Walter also served in WWII in the Pacific in Company M, 155th Infantry, 31st (Dixie) Division. He received the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, the Arrowhead, WWII Victory Medal and numerous others that were listed in his obituary.

His wife of 66 years preceded him in death by 3 years and he is survived by four daughters and five grandchildren. He was buried in Jackson where he made his home. 1924-2014

We also became aware of the death of Bob Hetherington, who was a native of Great Falls Montana who apparently married a local girl and thereafter made his home here. He spent most his adult life as a civilian training specialist and instructor for the USAF but was a man of varied interests and many talents and we remember him most for his service to our society which included taking pictures for us. Thoughts are with his wife Ruth and their family.

Our community has lost some of its brightness with the passing of Lisa Russell, Jackie Hutchinson, Mary Nell Rinkel, Lou Todd Hicks, Teresa Faye Scearce, Charles Sykes, Bernard Thomas Smoot, Charles Pique Sr, Irving DePierne Jr, Ivy Spigener, Lautain Scruggs, Gloria LoPresto, Patricia Catalano, John Francis Dennis, Mary Edwards, Scofield Berthelot, Kenneth Woodward, David Bogalin, Gerry Blaker, Jim Barry, James Sharp, Jerry Taylor, Ron Dockter, Harry Hartfield, Bedford Burkeen, Frank Irwin Jr, Brenda Bond, Doris Cook, Etta Marie Ladner, George Prine, Gayle Holcomb Bourdin, Chuck Mink, John Miotin, Sheila Walley, and Juanita Kranz.

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A local freight lead by GP-20 No. 903 switches at Long Beach.



Louisville & Nashville's depot at Long Beach, Mississippi circa 1925.



A northbound freight at Long Beach behind No.621 in April 1968.



L & N No. 666 on a freight at Long Beach in April 1968.



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