

Smoke From The Chimneys

Long Beach Historical Society



Remembering the past to preserve our future

October 2015

President's Message

Since the last edition of Smoke from the Chimneys, we had two important events, the dedication of our latest historical marker, commemorating Hurricane Katrina. We also had a well-attended Open House.

The marker dedication took place on the anniversary of the storm, Sat. Aug 29 at City Hall and was attended by a nice sized group and was televised by WLOX. Butch Oustalet Autoplex made a sizable donation to help us purchase the marker and we're very grateful. Donald and Ola Mae Dana, who were heavily involved, unveiled the marker.

The Open House on Sunday, Sep 20th, took the place of our September meeting. Several people thanked us for having the event. A lot of folks passed through the building during the afternoon, all showing signs of enjoyment. Some were current members who hadn't been with us in a while and took their time looking at everything. And yes, we did gain some new members!

An announcement will be made



for the opening date of our library at the Nov 16th meeting. The open hours may seem like a weekly Open House. Folks will be welcome to look at our pictures during that time also. Apparently some folks are just as interested in our pictures as others are in the information we'll have to share. Looks like we'll have a little bit of something for everyone.



Jere Hayward & Jennie Lacy

Please be thinking about a worthy recipient for the annual Mary Ellen Alexander Award to be awarded at the January meeting with the other awards. The MEA award is our most coveted and recognizes an individual who during their lifetime has made significant contributions to increasing the awareness, preservation, and appreciation of history relating to Long Beach, the Coast and the State. As usual, a nomination form is enclosed for your use. Please bring it with you to the meeting or mail it in.

The last quarter of the year is always a busy time with several functions taking place.

The Cemetery Tour this year will be on Thursday, Oct 22 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. Co-Chairs, Brenda Batey and Mary Levens and their committee have been hard at work on the event. This year's People of the Past are: Charles Littlepage and his daughter Susan L Pettus, Hale Boggs, Harper McCaughan, Louise Hartley Morehead, Mary Ellen Alexander, Bernard Reinike and J J Bailey, all very interesting. You won't want to miss it.

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

Beth Hansen: Editor
228-864-6100

Published quarterly by the
**Long Beach
Historical Society**

2015 Officers

- President – Beth Hansen
- Vice-President –
- Secretary – Allisa Beck
- Treasurer – Mary Levens
- Governmental Affairs Liaison - Mike Wren

Board of Directors

- Iantha Hines
- Paul Jermyn
- Gary Ponthieux
- 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 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**

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

The Veteran's Day Parade will take place before the next meeting. We haven't participated for the last two years and I'd love to see us involved in this again. I feel like it is of the utmost importance. We won't ever be able to honor our veterans enough. It's on Sunday, November 8th. We should arrive at 12:30 since it starts at 1:00. Meet us close to the Methodist Church so we may assemble together in one group. Keep in mind that we will be walking.

Christmas on the Avenue is on Dec 12 this year and is a good venue for keeping ourselves in the public eye. It's also a great place for calendar sales, chatting with friends and doing a little shopping too. There will be a Sign Up sheet at the meeting. Consider taking a short shift. There are always a lot of laughs at our booth and no shortage of people passing through that we all know.

One more thing that I'd like to mention to you is that recently I found out the full details of how and why our building was brought to Long Beach. Besides being grateful to Mayor Billy Skellie and the city for letting us use the building, we should also be grateful to a wonderful group of people in the Shenandoah Valley who named themselves "The Valley Responds", after seeing Katrina devastation. This group came into existence, within hours of seeing and hearing about Katrina on television, solely to help people in Mississippi, after noticing the focus seemed to be on NOLA. Part of the group immediately flew down here to check the place out and were responsible, with the help of God

and man, for being able to provide food and other necessities to those in need in our city. When they found out that the Baptist Church needed a nursery, one of the men went scouting around and stopped at a mobile home business and asked if anything was available for such a purpose. The owner of the business answered that he had been thinking of doing something but didn't know what and yes, he would donate a trailer to the cause. How cool is that? This wonderful faith based group returned here just prior to the 10th Anniversary and filmed all of the progress and this fabulous story was also revealed on the resulting video. I was just stunned and humbled and although this paragraph is a drastically condensed version of the goodness of "The Valley Responds" I wanted to share it with all of you

Sincerely,
Beth Hansen
President

NOVEMBER MEETING

At the November meeting, Allisa Beck will give a program on her recent book, Long Beach. Someone you know or may be related to is in this book and it is literally a timeline in pictures. We don't often see a book with the words, Long Beach on it, so this one is special. It also means that our city is now joined with several other coast cities already represented in this series. The new book will also make a fine addition to our own library.

As you know, Allisa is a past president of the society and

has been the faithful secretary for several years now as well as serving on many different committees through the years.

Allisa received her undergraduate degree in history from the University of South Alabama and master's degrees in library science and education from USM. She is currently Collection Management Librarian at USM's Gulf Park Campus.

Southerners Who Left the United States after the Civil War

Soon after the Civil War ended, it became apparent that many Southerners were planning to leave the United States. The intense thoughts and feelings which brought this on is very hard to describe. Many Southerners felt their financial situations were too bleak to remain in the country and their general outlooks had also changed. The Union army had burned many homes which included coveted possessions. Even the children were severely embittered. Years later as an adult, a Meridian man recalled his feelings about it by saying that in the absence of his father, he and his siblings, along with their mother, were left to starve after the Union army destroyed everything they had. However, even the President of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis, along with Generals G T Beauregard and Robert E Lee were doing their best to discourage the moves while dealing with their own bleak circumstances. The Daily Clarion in Jackson and the Daily Picayune in New Orleans were also

very vocal with criticism about those wishing to leave their homeland.

It was a trying time for all and to add to it, other countries were actively seeking out these new residents and the Confederates were ready for a fresh start.

Ships were sailing from New Orleans to Mexico, Cuba, British Honduras (now Belize), Guatemala, Brazil and other locations, laden with the disgruntled Southerners. British Honduras was very attractive not only for its close proximity but most people there spoke English which helped in the transition.

Exact numbers of those who left are sketchy at best due to faulty record keeping or from records being lost through the years but the estimates are in the thousands. Those who had not been burned out took along whatever material possessions they had along with any American farming tools which were far superior to those in the new chosen countries.

Louisiana and Mississippi residents were included in the exodus and residents from about twenty counties in each state contributed to the numbers. It should be mentioned that many families did change their minds and moved back but large numbers stayed and carved out new lives. Often times, the children were sent back to relatives in the U S for a certain amount of American schooling. After a lifetime some of the families moved back and it was thought that some just wanted to die on American soil. They all had

different reasons and a few of them settled here in Long Beach and also in Pass Christian.

The Watrous family of Monroe county, Mississippi, who were the ancestors of Mary Ellen Watrous Alexander, were among the group. Mary Ellen's father, Geoffrey Steele Watrous and all of his siblings were born in Punta Gorda, British Honduras, as were his cousins and other family members. The family had a successful life in Central America, operating a sugar and banana plantation and were involved in the exportation of Honduran mahogany. Geoffrey came ahead of his parents and siblings and attended college at Mississippi State. After his graduation, the whole family settled here in Long Beach in 1908. They bought a home on the beach near Jeff Davis Avenue. Some of the family members also lived for a short time in Jackson county.

Eight years earlier, in 1900, Charles P Littlepage and his family had moved to Long Beach. Perhaps he suggested this area to the Watrous family in correspondence as it would appear they knew each other. Charles was born in Virginia but his family moved to Missouri when he was very young. After the war, he was still single when he moved to Guatemala where he met and married Jeanne Anaise Perret, a French girl from Louisiana, whose family also made the move down there. Their six children were all born in Cobán, Guatemala. Mr. Littlepage was a successful coffee grower. There are Watrous and Perret family members buried in the

same cemetery in Belize, formerly British Honduras.

Charles Littlepage bought the Jordy home, Oakleigh, just east of Beach Park Place, on the beach. Sadly, he died the following year but his widow and children enjoyed the home for many years. His oldest daughter, who never married, and was known as Miss Louise, was in the home the longest, until her death in 1965. She had a great love for plants and her beautifully landscaped gardens were envied by many. She and the family were always assisted by Matias, (Mah teese) an Indian man, who was a young adult when he came here, along with the family, to work for them. At that time, the Littlepage property went all the way back to the railroad and Matias had a home some distance back from the main house. A twelve year old Indian girl, Lucy, also made the trip and was employed by the family.

It is thought, however, that the largest number of Southerners had moved to Brazil. Those who wanted to move had formed organizations for the express purpose of finding suitable land on which to settle and make their new homes.

One of the earliest to scout out that area was Mississippian, General William W Wood, a lawyer and the editor of the Natchez Free Trader. General Wood was royally entertained on his search with parades and celebrations while bands even played "Dixie". After the searching was finished and the decisions made to move to Brazil, ships were leaving from

New Orleans, Baltimore, New York, Galveston and Mobile.

The first ship to leave New Orleans was chartered by the Brazilian government and contained 350 refugees, all formerly families of above average means. After leaving the delta of the Mississippi river and reaching the Gulf of Mexico, they were on the lookout for pirates, or as they were called then, wreckers. Times were tough. They had to bypass St Thomas because of an outbreak of cholera and yellow fever on the island. The voyage was 5600 miles long.

Upon reaching Rio de Janeiro, it was a sight to behold. It's a magnificent city in a lush tropical setting dotted with mountains. As time went on, some of the Southerners would return to the United States. However, large numbers stayed and learned to speak Portuguese and assimilated themselves into the local culture, while still retaining their southern accents and ways. They became known as the Confederados.

President Jimmy Carter made a trip to Brazil while he was the Governor of Georgia, in 1972, and the dignitaries thought it fitting that he should meet some of the residents, in a colony there, whose ancestors had been born in Georgia. Gov Carter, who saw the flags of Brazil, America and the Confederacy, flying side by side, admitted to not knowing that such a colony even existed and tears rolled down his cheeks when he came face to face with the descendants. He said it was quite remarkable

that when they spoke they sounded just like people in south Georgia, one hundred years later, and of course, they were all born in Brazil. Another important fact noted by Governor Carter was the obvious love of the U S by these descendants and the way they preserved the names, inflections and ways of their ancestors.

Sources: Confederate Settlements in British Honduras by Donald C Simmons, Jr, The Lost Colony of the Confederacy by Eugene C Harter, and U S Federal Census and Immigration Records.

Please note that sources of the July newsletter story on Our Sister Cities were inadvertently omitted but they came from Wikipedia, delisle.passchristian.net, Loblolly Writer's House and rootsweb.com/history of Handsboro.

THANK YOU

A special thank you is in order for member and previous Long Beach resident, Pat Maxwell who has been living in Virginia for seventeen years now. She takes great pleasure in Smoke from the Chimneys since she is away from her roots. After reading in the last issue about the upcoming Cemetery Tour and how most societies use the donations derived from it for tombstone restoration, Pat sent us a very generous check, which is the first we've received, to begin our fund for this purpose. Some of the tombstones in our cemetery are getting quite old and with family members also gone, we will be able to maintain our graves in a proper manner. Thank you again Pat, you

are very much appreciated.

Thanks so much to Jim Agler at Lil Caesar's Pizza in Long Beach for the delicious pizza at the July meeting. Everyone really enjoyed having supper at the meeting. Remember to think of Jim for your next pizza. Thanks also to Gary Ponthieux!

Ola Mae and friends, Iantha Hines and Pat Skellie also did a great job on the refreshments and flowers at the Open House. Everything was very festive.

CONDOLENCES

Our thoughts go out to the families and friends of so many folks each time a newsletter goes out and this issue is no exception. We were saddened to learn of the passing of Norma Reinike Welch, sweet "Pum", who was from one of Long Beach's pioneer families. Condolences to her husband Jim, her children, and sister-in-law Stephanie Bass and brother-in-law, Bobby Spayde and other family members.

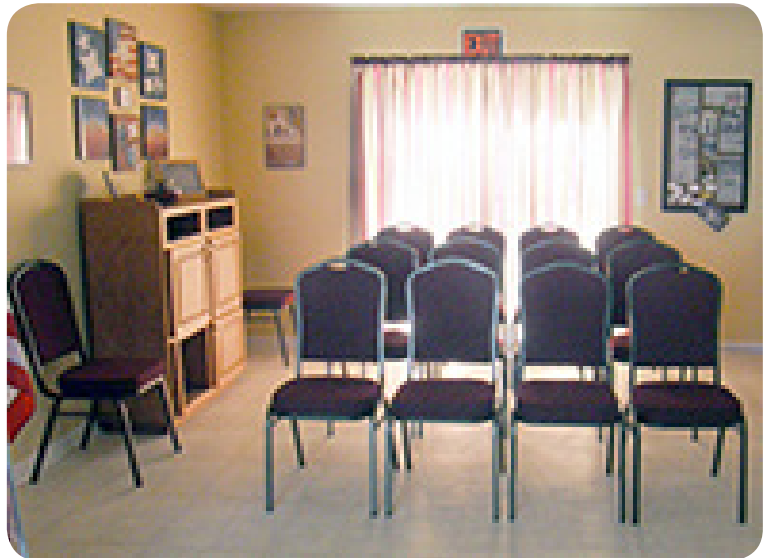
Donald Hayward, who graduated LB High in 1949 passed away in St Francisville, LA, Sidney Ray Maddux, Lucille Crowder, Helen Newman, John D Becker, Al Busche, Ronnie Daniels, Jewis Boone, Leona Watts, Lois Weems, Jeanette Bourgeois, Karola Williams, Margie Kelly, Al Krol, Glenn Mitchell, Shirley Cuevas, Herbert Allen Yeager Jr, Bobby Dwyer, Joseph Gemmel, Thomas Winn, Dr Ben Kitchings, Linda Piety, Billie June Sanders and Shirley Sneed-Oblinger.

BIRTHDAY WISHES

It's never too late for good wishes. We hear that Mrs Polly Mincher celebrated her 97th birthday last Feb 15th. Congrats on that Miz Polly. We'll make sure and be on time next year and all the years afterward.



1938 Fillingim Sweater





Two photos of the new library



From the MEA Room, one from the On The Beach Wall, the other is the Officers table



MARY ELLEN ALEXANDER LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The MARY ELLEN ALEXANDER LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, presented by the LONG BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY, recognizes individuals who during their lifetime have made significant contributions in increasing the awareness, preservation, and appreciation of history relating to Long Beach, the Mississippi Gulf Coast region, and the State of Mississippi.

The LONG BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY invites nominations for the MARY ELLEN ALEXANDER LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD. This award is presented annually at the January meeting of the society. Nominations must be received by October 31 to be considered that year. Nominations received after October 31 will be considered the following year.

Nominee Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

**SUMMARY OF NOMINEE'S LIFETIME ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS THAT MERIT THE AWARD
(Please continue additional sheets as necessary and attach or reference supporting documentation that should be considered.)**

Nominated by: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Mail nominations to Long Beach Historical Society, P.O. Box 244, Long Beach, MS 39560

STORM RECOVERY

After being battered by wind, rain, and storm surge, Long Beach and its residents almost immediately began to receive help from volunteers. Churches, civic clubs, college groups, charitable organizations, and individuals from across America formed clean-up teams, chain-saw teams, and home repair teams to assist residents. Distribution centers for water and hot meals and first-aid emergency medical centers, manned by volunteers, were opened across the city. Federal and State personnel provided planning consultants and authorized grants to help rebuild central business district, construct new municipal buildings, and replace miles of damaged underground sewerage and water lines.

ERECTED AUGUST 29, 2015
LONG BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND BUTCH OUSTALET AUTOPLEX



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