



Long Beach Historical Society

Remembering the past to preserve our future

July 2017

President's Message

Before beginning, I'd like to say that I hope you all fared well during the recent hammering that Long Beach endured during the heavy winds and rain. We've all now seen standing water here in the Friendly City where water has never been seen standing before. It's been mind boggling looking at the pictures and videos on social media, which not only allows us to keep in touch but also renders the shock factor from time to time. P S..Hope you former Long Beachians fared well in your present locations too.

It's been a relatively quiet 2nd quarter of the year for us but busy is in the air again with the upcoming meeting and the twentieth anniversary celebration next month.

Twenty years has flown by pretty quickly, in some ways. I'm still thankful that ex-mayor and member, Billy Skellie asked if the society wanted to use the building that we now call home. The fact that the Board of Aldermen approved the action and we accepted it has been a real boon

for us and will continue to be so. Having the ability to display the city history on the walls, through pictures and other information, will only continue to help us grow and share with others.

We're also working in the background on this year's cemetery tour and calendar. The calendar is on Gulf Park College, the elite women's college that occupied the present USM property from 1921 until 1971. It's always been a source of pride for our small city to be the home of not one, but two colleges, so it's only fitting that Gulf Park should be showcased on a calendar.

Look for more about the cemetery tour in the next issue of Smoke from the Chimneys, but be sure that it will be as good as it was last year

Sincerely,

Beth Hansen,
President

Previous program in April

The April program on the sixteen Long Beach men who made the ultimate sacrifice in four different wars was warmly received by those at the meeting and many of us were still talking about it during the refreshment break.

One thing that we talked about was that now everyone can know where our men are buried or memorialized. People travel all over the world now and if any of you are ever close to any of these locations, the paying of one's respect and maybe taking a picture or two of the grave or memorial could become a highlight.

Any of you who missed the meeting may read the files on each of the men at any time. They are on permanent display in the society library. You are welcome to call me for an appointment at any time and I will be glad to meet you at the building. Also, from time to time I will put some of the bios of the men here in Smoke from the Chimneys, beginning with this issue. Information that could be

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**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

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.

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:

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



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found on each man varies so each presentation has a life of its own and there were a few chuckles heard here and there.

Upcoming Program

Thomas E Simmons, local author and historian, will be speaking to us about his book, *The Man Called Brown Condor*. The book tells the true story of Charles Robinson of Gulfport, an African-American fighter pilot. Against all odds, for his time, through dedication and hard work, Robinson fulfilled a lifelong dream of becoming a pilot.

Tom, also a pilot, beginning at age of sixteen, has participated in air shows in open-cockpit planes so he identifies greatly with the subject matter. He attended Marion Military Institute, the U S Naval Academy, USM and the University of Alabama.

Thirty years of research went into this book and it received the 2015 Gold Medal Award for the biography. Tom's work also appears in magazine and various other publications.

Ptolemy, an astronomer and geographer, who lived 18 centuries ago, is said to have made and used the first atlas.



A Glimpse into the Lives of Long Beach's Fallen

Thomas J Gotliboski, Chief Watertender. As you will soon discover, his story is very dramatic and very chilling, to say the least.

Tom was born in Naugatuck, CT, the son of a shoemaker at U S Rubber, located in that city. Both of his parents were born in Poland and Tom was one of several siblings.

He enlisted in the Navy in 1928 and had served in the destroyer scouting fleet, battle fleet, river gunboat and Yangtze Patrol, with transportation service from Norfolk VA to Shanghai, China.

Somewhere along the way, this Navy man met a Long Beach girl, Edna Cruthirds. They married in the late 30's and a few years later purchased property in Long Beach on which to build a home in the near future. Sounds like Tom was adopting our little city.

A son was born to the couple in January, 1940 while Tom Sr was in Shanghai on board his ship, the USS Henderson. By July, he was back home on leave and he and Edna were soon on the way to Connecticut to visit Tom's parents and other relatives to show off their new baby boy.

Chief Gotliboski eventually received orders for a brand new ship, the USS Mount Hood, which had been commissioned on July 1, 1944. (Yes, it was named for the volcano on Mount Hood in Oregon.)

The Mount Hood was an ammunitions ship, and in Nov of 1944 was on Manus Island, one of the Admiralty Islands north of New Guinea. It was berthed in the Seeadler Harbor, one of the worlds' largest natural harbors. At times more than 400 large ships; cruisers, battleships, freighters, troopships, etc. have been seen anchored there.

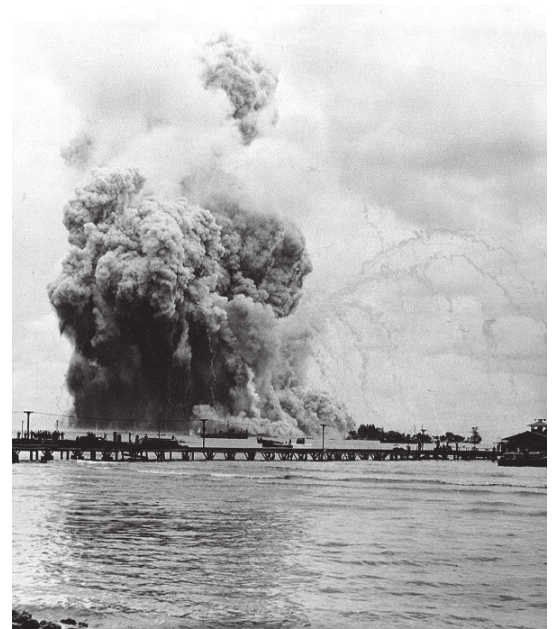
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On the morning of Nov 10, fourteen of the crew, an officer and 13 enlisted men, had gone ashore for routine mail and miscellaneous supplies. 249 men remained on the ship and shortly thereafter, the Mount Hood, loaded with 4,000 tons of ammunition, EXPLODED.

The fourteen men on shore ran for their transport to return to the ship but had to turn back in the chaos that followed, which was later described as A SCENE FROM HELL. Metal debris, weighing as much as 150 pounds was raining over the other ships in the harbor, AS THE MOUNT HOOD AND THE ENTIRE CREW HAD COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED. THERE WERE NO BITS OF HUMAN REMAINS TO BE FOUND FROM IT.

The reported recollections of the occasion are mind boggling to say the least. Some of the other sailors say the ship was illegally parked, as an ammunition ship is supposed to be a certain distance away from other ships. No reason was given for the explosion except for possible "rough handling" of the ammo on board. There's no need to talk about some of the ways the men from OTHER SHIPS died in this tragedy but for those who want to know more about it, go to ww2today.com/10-november-1944 for a more thorough reporting of it.



Mrs. Gotliboski, a very sweet lady, never remarried after her husband's death and just concentrated on raising their son, Tom Jr, whom we knew as Tommy. He went to St Thomas Elementary and graduated from LB High in 1958. Tommy received accounting and law degrees from MS State and the University of Texas. He was married to Jerry Nell Hatem of Long Beach and they were the parents of Tom III and made their home in Texas where Tom Jr died at age 62 in 2002.

Jack Ira McIntosh, PFC, was born in Hillsdale, MS on May 27, 1918 and attended school in Lyman, MS.

Private McIntosh was inducted into the U S Army in January 1942 with 9 other coast men on the same day. His training took place at Camp Shelby in MS, Camp Wheeler and Fort Benning in GA, Camp Blanding in FL and Indiantown Gap, PA before being sent to England.

Several months after Jack was sent overseas, he and his wife became the parents of a baby girl, Patricia Ann, whom he was never able to see before his untimely death. He was killed in action in Germany on October 13, 1944 when his daughter was 2 years old.

Jack was in the infantry and saw action in many places before his death, including taking part in the Tunisian and African campaigns, where he was slightly wounded. After his recovery Private McIntosh was sent to Italy and fought in the Sicilian campaign prior to being sent to France and then back to England again.

Three years after Jack's death, the return of our fallen WWII soldiers, who were being held in temporary cemeteries, officially got underway. It was thought that a logistical nightmare may have ensued in an attempt to bring the men home amid the fighting. When Jack finally came home in 1947, on the Joseph V Connolly, a transport ship which left Europe from Antwerp, Belgium, he was with 6,247 other dead from the European theater. The Connolly was one of eight ships refitted to carry heavy steel coffins. After docking in the New York

harbor, one symbolic memorial casket, taking the place of all, was carried ashore by pallbearers and placed on a caisson. It was borne up 5th Avenue in a procession of 6,000 military personnel, including General Dwight D Eisenhower, to a memorial service in Central Park. It was the quietest procession in the history of New York as 400,000 weeping people stood in silence along the route as they honored the dead of WWII. There were another 150,000 people waiting in Central Park.

Although sincerity was just as deep in Gulfport, MS, such fanfare did not take place at our small town depot, a few days later, although a newspaper article listed five men from Harrison County and one from Jackson County arriving home together. It's most comforting to know that our government and New York residents paid the highest in condolences to our fallen.

Interment for Private McIntosh took place in the Allen Cemetery here in Long Beach. In addition to his wife, Ruby, and daughter Patsy, Jack was survived by his parents, Mr. & Mrs. Ira McIntosh, 4 sisters and one brother.

Jack's daughter "Patsy" married her high school sweetheart and classmate, Thomas Whitfield. They have been married for over 50 years and are the parents of 3 children, 6 grandchildren, and 6 great grandchildren.

Donnie Leo Levens, a 25 year old Marine and grandson of member and past officer, Mary Levens, lost his life in a helicopter crash in Africa during The Afghanistan War.

There were three unusual facts about Donnie's February 17, 2006 death. He died on his mother's birthday; his Catholic funeral Mass was held in the First United Methodist Church; (such is life in "The Friendly City" after a hurricane.) and he was promoted to Staff Sergeant posthumously.

Soon after graduating from Long Beach High School in 1998, with several cousins in his class, mine and Danny's daughter included, Donnie then enlisted in the Marine Corps. At the time of his death, he was serving with a heavy helicopter squadron and was in training to become a helicopter pilot.

Donnie's life in the military echoed his activities here in Long Beach. While a member of the CYO, the Catholic Youth Organization at St Thomas Church, he made several trips to Saltillo, Mexico, a long time mission of the church, to help the less fortunate. While stationed in Hawaii, he volunteered for many activities at Kailua Elementary School, even mentoring some of the students.

It was also not unusual for Donnie to receive scholastic awards and he also received the Air Medal for meritorious achievement by President Bush.

Many were at the Biloxi-Gulfport airport to welcome Donnie home on his final flight. He is buried at Pine Ridge Gardens in Gulfport.

Donnie has been described as being a kind, bright and motivated young man who grew into a thoughtful gentleman. He was a source of pride to his mother, Margaret, who said her son left this world doing what made him happy.

Here is a listing of graves and memorials of our fallen. Two of the men, Edward B Davis and Harry F Rishel are buried not too far apart in the Lorraine Cemetery in St Avoild, France. Davis is in plot J, row 23, grave 19. Rishel is in block S, row 3, grave 62.

The following MIA's and the locations where they're listed on memorial walls around the world are: Yancey

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Conn, Florence American Cemetery; Harold Ervin at the Honolulu, Hawaii Memorial; Barney Reeves in Tunisia, North Africa; Tom Gotliboski in Manila, Philippines; and J Edward Simmons at the Normandy, France American Cemetery. Several of these men also have memorials close to the graves of family members, here at home.

David Hayes is buried in the National Cemetery in Mobile, AL; Jack McIntosh, Allen Cemetery in Long Beach, MS; Karlson Thomas in the Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno, CA; Onick Nazaretian at the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St Louis, MO. Eddie Blake is buried in Southern Memorial Park in Biloxi, MS; Leo Meyers in the Biloxi City Cemetery; David Creel in the Oak Lawn Cemetery in McHenry, MS; and Donnie Levens is in the Pine Ridge Gardens in Gulfport. No grave site has been found, as yet, for Luke Jefferson, but the search is continuing.

The Special 102nd Birthday again!!

Mrs. Claire Boggs Morrison called to thank us for the birthday card that we sent her in April for her 102nd birthday. She enjoyed reading all the names of those who were here in January to sign it and said she remembered each one.

Condolences

Sadly, several members have gone on to their great reward during the last quarter. We had already missed seeing Denise Gaddy out and about during this last year as illness kept her in. Heartfelt sympathy is extended to Dr. Hurd and his family. He and Dee had been married 67 years and created many memories during that time.

Unknown to us at press time on the April newsletter, Pat Maxwell, formerly of Long Beach, had already passed in March. She'd made her home in Virginia since finding happiness again after the death of her husband Sam. She and Sam's brother, Kenneth, a widower, would share several years before his death. A few years ago, Pat sent us a nice donation for cemetery upkeep, after reading about our cemetery tour in *Smoke from the Chimneys*, which she adored because it reminded her of home.

Our thoughts are also with Tammy Casey, whose husband George, Class of 1969, recently passed. He was a member of St Thomas Church, retired from Dupont and also had a thriving flea market business in knife sales for many years.

Condolences also to Lester Kunz, a graduate of St Thomas School and Long Beach High, Class of 1961, whose wife, Rebecca, recently passed. Lester has been living away for a long time now but worked at Skellie's Food Store while in high school. He always enjoys his trips "home" and visiting old friends.

Also to the families of Cornelius Bernard Boggan, Martha O'Donnell, Max Anthony Word, Mary Barker, Howard Van Johnson, Bob Mitchell, Veda Mae Bellew, Hazel Holdeman, Roxanne Gross, Robert K Jones, Jeri Runnels, John F McMichael, Sr, Tommy Necaise, Janice Walsh, Bruce Cornell, John Begue, III, Kenneth Colaluca, Jimmy Lassabe, June Labat, Jonathan Poe, Marilyn Blaine, Danny Barrett, Margie Martin, Gwendolyn Armstrong, Louise Ramsay, Jeffrey Kretz, Katherine O'Brien, Norman Bullard, Buster Young, Trellis Barry, Grace Staubs, Sue Cockrell, Gail Marie, Joseph Buckley, Patsy Turner, Albert Rowell, and Virginia Pitts.

SMOKE FROM THE CHIMNEY'S

Old Newspaper Articles from The Daily Herald

Harrison County Courthouse, Mississippi City. Saturday, Aug 13, 1892. Squire Crawford had an interesting term of court on Tuesday. Long Beach was well represented. In the case of William McCaughan vs J Thomas, the case was dismissed at plaintiff's cost. In the matter of William McCaughan vs Salathiel Smith, a compromise was effected before the case came to trial.

Mississippi City, Saturday, Nov 10, 1894. Lucien Myers of Handsboro, was here last Tuesday. Reports say that Mr. Myers will soon open a drug store at that thriving town, Long Beach. His friends wish him success.

Yearly Dues Reminder

Remember dues were due on January 1st.

Membership Jan 1 - Dec. 31

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

Payment Options:

1. Pay at meeting
Mail in a check to:
Long Beach Historical Society
P. O. Box 244
Long Beach, MS 39560
2. Pay online at our website:
www.lbhistoricalsociety.com

No Dues After Age 90!

Remember that after your 90th birthday, the society no longer charges dues. Your membership NEVER expires. Look on the outside of Smoke from the Chimneys and the date under your name shows when yearly dues expire. Anyone over 90 will see the word Never in place of a date. Just a small thank you to our senior members for the fine example set before us.



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