



Long Beach Historical Society

Remembering the past to preserve our future

January/April 2021

President's Message

Hello fellow members,

Yes, the historical society is alive and well, but since many of us are in the high-risk group it seemed prudent to adhere to a forced hiatus from meeting in order to keep everyone safe. Now that statistics have improved and vaccinations are on the upswing, we must return our important organization to the limelight once more, so plan on attending the April meeting.

Social distancing and masking will take place in the building but to err on the side of caution, we will not be serving any food at this time. Bear with us as these limitations are strictly for our protection. Hopefully, we may be able to achieve more normalcy at the July meeting.

I am happy to announce the addition of two new board members. Mrs. Monnie Little Shirley, a Long Beach High School graduate, class of 1960, is a retired dental hygienist. Monnie and her late husband, the Rev. Gene Shirley, lived in Florida for many years and she now makes her home here once again.

Also, Lucius Marks, class of 1964, who has also been in Kentucky for many years. Lucius, associated with H. R. Gray Construction, as Senior VP of program and construction has worked on many large national U. S. projects in management services and would be happy to assist on the Greenvale project if needed.

Both of these members love Long Beach and gleefully accepted the invitations to serve on the Board of our society.

We are still excited about the donation of the Greenvale house to the city for its use and the use of the Long Beach Historical Society. Built in the early 1890's the home is the oldest one still standing in our city. The landmark home was built by Jim and Merinda Young Quarles, (parents of Mae Quarles Watrous). This generous donation was made by Quarles heirs, Dr. Jim Alexander and his sister, Janet, Mrs. Christopher Griffin, the children of Mary Ellen Watrous Alexander, founder of the society. These

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

Beth Hansen: Editor
228-864-6100

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**Long Beach
Historical Society**

Officers

- President – Beth Hansen
- Secretary – Allisa Beck
- Treasurer – Eddie Ware

Board of Directors

- Monnie Shirley
- Lucius Marks
- Bernie Parker

Mailing Address:

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

Physical Address

645 Klondyke RD.

Meetings will all be held
on the THIRD Mondays at
Historical Society Building,
645 Klondyke Rd.

2021 Meetings:

- January 18 - Canceled
- April 19 - 6:00 p.m.
- July 19 - 6:00 p.m.
- October 18 - 6:00 p.m.

Email Address:

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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

two donors are of course, great grandchildren of the builders of the home. Surely, MEA and her ancestors are beaming with pride at this wonderful turn of events!

To get the ball rolling on a fabulous restoration, the city created a small group which it appropriately named the Greenvale Group, of which Eddie Ware and I are members. The group has been meeting for quite some time now, working and planning on bringing the hopes and dreams to fruition of what Greenvale can be for all concerned since the disbursement of the two million dollar grant earmarked for restoring the old home to its former glory. Architects and others have been consulted and all planning and design stages are in progress.

Mayor George Bass spoke to us at an earlier meeting about possible ideas for usage of Greenvale and how it will be an asset to all as the city welcome center and home base of the society. Now the project is at the point in time when some of those ideas are close to taking form. I feel the mayor's excitement!

In order to give you all the pertinent information available on this exciting project, Jenny Levens, Public Affairs Director of the City, will be our guest speaker at the next meeting on April 19th at 6:00 p. m. at the History House. Jenny is heavily involved in all aspects of this project and we will all be enlightened after her presentation. Remember, she was the recipient of our last Harper McCaughan award!

I'm looking forward to seeing you on April 19th..

Sincerely
Beth Hansen

It's been a year since our oldest member left us at age 105! Remembering Mrs. Claire Boggs Morrison, April 12, 1915 - April 19, 2020.

Flowers from Springs Past

Coast residents are eager to see not only the end of the pandemic but also the end of an especially nasty Fall and a cold Winter, a long season that just keeps on giving!!

Long Beach has always been known for being extremely successful in growing vegetables and now is a good time to focus on the beauty of springs and summers of the past when the city and the residents alike were very involved in flower gardens and growing lovely flowers to sell. The latter group was very successful at shipping its plants to other states just as the vegetable farmers did so very long ago. Perhaps the farmers were an inspiration.

McRee Flowers

Florist May McRee comes to mind first. May had established a successful gladiolus business in Jackson, Tennessee and was engaged in selling most of her blooms to the large hotels in New Orleans.

In 1920 Mrs. McRee registered at the Live Oak Hotel on East Beach, the oldest hotel in Long Beach, to check out local growing conditions in this area. She immediately saw that Long Beach was ablaze with color about a month sooner than in Tennessee.

She first conducted a flower farm of several acres on the property of Jim Quarles. She found the climate and soil to be much more conducive to success than in Tennessee.

James and May McRee purchased property on West Beach Blvd two houses away from the Van Cloostere property. It was located on the East corner of Trautman Ave going back to Magnolia St. Their blooms contributed much color on the beach in the spring and summer months but by 1926 they were renting out their beach front home to tourists for the summer season. (Another thriving business: tourist rentals)

May began shipping her flowers to northern states. They were boxed with a quantity of damp paper and were shipped to other states with great success, always arriving in first class condition. Bulbs were also marketed.

The couple had also bought property in the Landon area and eventually moved their residence there along with the business and were also very successful with narcissus, Darwin tulips and winter grass at that location in addition to gladiolus. They later sold the beach front property to a New

Orleanean who was very happy with the 191 feet on the beach which extended back 1170 feet in some places.

After living here for many years, May McRee suddenly passed away at age 59 in 1936. Friends and loved ones were shocked and saddened at her premature passing.

The Glad Farm Property

Harper McCaughan's brother, William, first owned the property located where North Cleveland Avenue is today and east of it too. Later the land would be purchased by James B. Cable from Chicago, who would be the nearest neighbors of the Jim Quarles family who lived about where the new Fast Pace Walk-In Clinic is located today. We know the Quarles house today as Greenvale.

Gaspar Carrubba was the next owner who farmed at the site during the truck farming heyday. He was also engaged in the fateful strawberry era

Sinclair Floral Company

The property was later sold to John Sinclair of Sinclair Florist in Meridian who purchased it in the late 1930's. He wanted to engage in the wholesale gladioli business to ship the blooms from the one hundred acre location. He eventually shipped close to a million blooms each season to varied points including New York, Denver, Philadelphia and Detroit and claimed the sandy soil and climate were ideal conditions in which to grow the flowers.

He planted the bulbs in December, January and February and began cutting and shipping in May. Approximately 50,000 bulbs are harvested in a day. He also shared that really large farms in the East may harvest 50 to 100 million in the same time frame.

Mr. Sinclair said that any dirt farmer could raise gladioli but the difficulty lies in marketing the crop without taking too large a loss.

John had originally come here to improve his health and possibly that fact may have influenced his decision to sell his business in 1945. He placed an ad in a national magazine which caught the attention of an attorney in Idaho, who promptly came down here to see the property and bought it. Two years later, in 1947, John Sinclair passed away.

Gulf Coast Glad Farm

The attorney who became a Glad farmer was Clarence Thomas, from Burley, Idaho. He and his wife, Ione, engaged in successfully growing and shipping the glads until Clarence's death in 1952.



Two years after her husband's death, Mrs. Thomas entered Civil Service at the Seabee Base and served as secretary to five commanding officers before retiring. During this time, she kept the Glad Farm Open but business usually took place after her children returned home from school in the afternoons and helped the customers with their purchases. Local loyal customers didn't seem to mind in the least as the gladioli were the finest to be offered.

Other activities also began taking place on her vast amount of land that was very beneficial to Mrs. Thomas and to the area, the Glad Farm Riding Stables, (with competitions) and also a successful Day Camp along with those beautiful gladiolus!

Beautification in Long Beach

Remember hearing about the Municipal Rose Garden in the city? It was on the site of our present City Hall. It featured a water pool and was beautifully laid out with 650 fragrant hybrid tea roses accented by walk ways radiating from a sun dial placed in the center. The sun dial was a gift from Mrs. Grace Jones Stewart, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Joseph T. Jones of Gulfport and was in memory of her mother. Three other plants, all Golden Rain Trees were planted in memory of three pioneers of the community, Mr. Harper McCaughan; Mr. James Thomas; and Mr. Jim Quarles by members of their families.

The Rose Garden was a project of the Long Beach Garden Club and was truly a thing of beauty, as expressed by reports back in the day, for many, many years.

Raising Gladioli for Sale and Shipment

The twenties and thirties were a busy time for the city in local gardens, many for pleasure and some for business. Some of those growing plants for sale were Mrs. R. L. Glass; Mrs. Katherine Inglis Hendrickson and John and Joanna Allen of Lilydale Nursery on the corner of Girard Avenue and Oak St.

In 1925, the Allens invited the public to stop by and see the 40,000 Easter Lilies at their Lilydale Nursery.

Joanna Allen also raised many other different kinds of plants in her greenhouses, some exotic. She apparently liked orchids, bougainvillea, cyclamen and many others and was fond of giving away bouquets to her customers and visitors.



A field of Easter lilies at Lilydale Nursery, Girard Avenue and Oak Street, owned by Mr. and Mrs. John Allen.

L & N Depot Gardens

Louisville & Nashville Railroad long had a garden to the west of its depot which was beautifully maintained by the railroad. In 1930, the Long Beach Garden Club installed a garden on the east side to go along with it. Onlookers agreed that the whole area was most attractive.

Louis Lang Residence

Mr. & Mrs. Louis Lang of New Orleans, built themselves a Spanish Villa at 222 West Beach Blvd. where they had an absolutely extensive and vast garden known as Rose Lawn, which contained from 2,000 – 3,000 roses in row after row, parallel to azalea beds with the roses dominating all. They were partial to Louis Phillippe roses as well as rose colored Crepe Myrtles along with Spanish bayonet and cacti.

A serene feature was a series of pools all containing water lilies and water poppies. The garden also featured ivy-covered rockeries beside the pools accompanied by tall lotus beds. Included too was a pagoda garden.

A large solarium behind the Villa was complimented with a large circular

pool designed with cobblestones. Any place without plants were formal lawn areas, all a sight to see.

The Langs won numerous awards for their garden over the years from the Garden Club and merchants contests, etc. Reports of the beauty of this Long Beach garden were even reported in the Times Picayune from time to time.

The Langs were very gracious about sharing the beauty of their grounds with others in the community. Garden Club meetings frequently took place there as well as other functions too.

Rossmere Springs Mineral Water

For anyone who has ever read about the Rossmere Springs water which was assumed as being upon the market, there has always been more questions about it than answers.

This subject has long been pondered upon and the best we can come up with is only a small bit of information from the year 1896. At that time, there was a widower, James V. Ross, a railroad official, living here in town in a home on West Beach Boulevard, with his adult son, Augustin.

This beach front home occupied by the Ross family was situated on the corner of Lang Avenue, which as some of you may remember, had a free-flowing artesian well on the side of the front yard, most likely situated on city property. This property adjoins the Boggs compound on the east side.

Word of mouth made the water availability very popular and residents and tourists would bring their own containers to the Ross home, which they were allowed to fill to their heart's content. In the old days, a large group of New York tourists came from Pass Christian one day to fill their jugs and couldn't stop talking about the goodness of the water.

According to an early Long Beach resident, James B. Cable, there was even talk that some of these tourists would develop "the springs" in connection with the proposed electric railroad.

Although free water was there for the taking and someone had even suggested a name for a future enterprise, nothing else has been found in print to corroborate anything concrete pertaining to the above.

We are always on the hunt and will report back to you with whatever does turn up.

W. J. "Jim" and Merinda Quarles Home in Long Beach, MS

Jim Quarles, a farmer and school teacher, from Tennessee, first came to Long Beach during his Christmas break from school in 1883. Before returning home he purchased two parcels of property, one with a home on 43 acres facing the railroad line, and another on the beach.

Jim, Merinda, and the children, moved here a few weeks later, in January of 1884. After a long train ride, the family moved into a house on their newly acquired land, north of the railroad, soon after de-boarding, on a cold, rainy, winter's night. Luckily, the family was met by three townsmen with lanterns, who walked them to their new home where an inviting fire had already warmed the dwelling.



Eight years after moving to Long Beach, the Quarles family built themselves a new home, known as Greenvale. Resting on brick piers, the 127 year old two story home is two rooms deep with five bays across the front. The entrance door has a glass transom and the home contains an interior chimney. The outer walls are covered in clapboard. Two large porches originally stretched across the entire width of the home, on the upper and lower levels. The structure was quite festive with gingerbread trim on the posts and sawn wood balusters adorning the upper level.

Mr. Quarles occupied the house until his death in 1924. At the time of Mrs. Quarles' death in 1935, she was living elsewhere. Exactly when the home was vacated is not known but it was sealed for most of the second half of the twentieth century and into the present.

Greenvale was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 and by 2003, it was also listed as one of the ten most endangered historic places in the state.

The family owner was prompted to request a move for the house, which fronted Railroad Street, to make the property more desirable for commercial sale. The house was deemed to be structurally sound and the move was approved by the National Register of Historic Places in 2012. The house now sits on the back of the property, facing a narrow winding road. Through the years, hurricane damage has not been kind to the old beauty and its expansive porches, which are gone. After the move, repairs were begun for historical accuracy but not yet completed.

Sources:

Rosalie and Radishes: A History of Long Beach, Mississippi for picture and info
Wikipedia for National Register of Historic Places info



W.J. Quarles House: The oldest house in Long Beach, built in the early 1890's. This is an incredible landmark just by knowing the hurricanes it withstood to be around for us today. We are truly lucky that it will be available for all of Long Beach very soon. If you were ever a student of Carol Paola, you have probably learned everything about this home. She has worked tirelessly to keep this landmark from being torn down. It is already standing stronger than ever before due to restoration funds she helped make possible. Everyone that purchases one of these prints will be helping this landmark stand for many more decades to come because \$15 of every print sold will be reinvested back into this beautiful home. The print is of the W.J. Quarles house transitioning from the current state of the home to the restored state. If you pre-order now, you will receive the low numbered prints. They are 8" x 10" in an 11" x 14" black or white mat for \$35.00. If unable to pick up they can be shipped for an additional cost of \$6.50.

If you are local and want to save the shipping cost you can pick up prints at City Hall, just make a note on the form. You will be notified when the prints are available for pickup.

Only 100 will be produced so get yours while available.

Thank you so much for your support.

Design by Jaimie Bolden of Landmarks Restored.

Mail completed order and check payable to Jaimie Bolden to:
Long Beach Historical Society
P. O. Box 244
Long Beach, MS 39560

Old Newspaper Clippings

1888

Correspondence of the Picayune: Long Beach is enjoying unusual prosperity at this time. The crop of early vegetables is going to the market and the returns are exceedingly satisfactory. Snap beans are going for over \$8 per box in Chicago, where the gardeners are shipping to. If the harvest finishes up anything like it began, the farm lands will be in great demand for another year. Coast lands are well adapted to truck farming, it's plain to see. Hundreds of fruit trees were planted here last season, Bartlett pears, Japanese chestnuts and oranges. This last named fruit will doubtless be in great favor in this latitude. They are said to be of superior quality and are able to withstand the cold almost to the zero mark without injury. Some small trees, imported from Japan the past winter by Thomas Brothers are full of oranges at this time. Such trees will pay handsome profits long before our native varieties have come into bearing; besides, the fruit is a better price than native oranges.

1891

James Thomas, overseer, township 8, range 12, allowed \$200, to be expended on Front road between Mississippi City and Pass Christian.

James Thomas, overseer, township 8, range 12, instructed to open Front road between 5 mile post and bridge near Robert Boggs, to a width of 30 feet.

W. J. Quarles, H. Brown, Frank Taquino, Uriel Wright, Pierre Michel, Harper McCaughan and Robert Boggs appointed commissioners to examine route of proposed change of Front road at the property of P. Michel. Commissioners to meet on Sep. 26th, 1891, and report on Oct. 12, 1891.

1900

The Gulf & Ship Island railroad was a great sufferer from the recent storms, and its tracks have not yet been sufficiently repaired for a resumption of train service. It is also given out that the damage done will delay the completion of the line into Jackson fully three months, which will be deplored by the people of that city, as well as those living along its line.

Old Newspaper Clippings

1921

Long Beach Shipping Truck All day long trucks and wagons can be seen in Long Beach filled with vegetables for shipment to the big market centers. From two to three cars a day are moving, and prices are said to be good, radishes netting from \$12 to \$15 the barrel. The season has been most favorable and vegetables as a result are earlier, and better than heretofore. Many new farms have lately been developed in the Long Beach section and in consequence larger quantities of vegetables will be produced this season.

1921

Long Beach Truck in Car Lots Col. R. Inglis of Long Beach reports that the vegetable association of which he is the executive officer is shipping three and a half cars a day and that the other association there is moving as many cars. Radishes are said to be still in demand by the produce dealers in the north and their price continues good.

1934

Easter Egg Hunt Mr. & Mrs. Warren Allen entertained at an Easter egg hunt for their children and a group of friends. The eggs were hidden in the home grounds. George Rishel was awarded the prize for finding the most eggs. Refreshments of cake, sherbet and candy were served. The home was decorated with the Easter motif for the occasion. Children present were Martin and Fannie Allen, Elaine and John Holley, Jr. Annette and Leon Duke, Jr. Anna Louise Berry, Gladys Lassere, Mable and Jimmy Dauro. Dolores Switzer, Russell and Margaret Allen, George Rishel, Mildred, Bertha Louise and Matthew Smith, and adults present were: Misses Jester Switzer, Jane Smith and Helen Reed, Ralph Rishel, Lawrence L. Duke. Mr. and Mrs. S. F. Switzer, Mr. & Mrs. John Holley, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Smith, Mr. & Mrs. Vincent Dauro, Mr. & Mrs. Joe Dauro, Mrs. J. R. Wilson and Mr. & Mrs. Warren Allen.



Long Beach Historical Society
PO Box 244
Long Beach, MS 39560-0244



Find more at lbhistoricalsociety.org

DUES ARE DUE

Dues are due every January, unless you recently paid or recently joined during the latter part of last year.

Check the address label to see if your membership has lapsed.

- Per Individual \$15.00
- Family \$20.00
- Student \$5.00 (thru 12th grade).

Mail to:

Long Beach Historical Society
PO Box 244

Long Beach, MS 39560

You may also pay online:

www.lbhistoricalsociety.org/members

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