



# Long Beach Historical Society

Remembering the past to preserve our future

July 2022

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## President's Message

Happy summer to all!

I began writing this on mine and Danny's Sixtieth Wedding Anniversary, July 1. That's a long time!!!

We're very thankful that we've come this far together. It's been fun reading the congratulatory messages on social media.

We so enjoyed Carol Paola's program in April. We thank her for her zeal in introducing elementary school students to the past and also getting them involved in part of the work around the time the Quarles House was moved from Railroad St. It's amazing how young students can just jump in with the vigor of adults and work to get things done, when they have to. These former students, now adults, will certainly be happy with the culmination of the restoration.

The July program will be presented by Carolyn Reeves Hamilton, on her dad, the beloved Thomas L "Joe" Reeves, who was our school Superintendent for 32 years.

Sincerely  
Beth Hansen

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## SHOWBOATS AND CHATAUQUAS

Entertainment has always been important to most of us and this brings to mind the old cliché, all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy! People in the 21st century have been very fortunate in having a plethora of entertainment to choose from, but our ancestors, on the other hand, were not so lucky. Try to picture the 1800's. At that time, some fortunate families owned pianos and other instruments and became very adept at creating their own home entertainment.

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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

**Officers**

- President – Beth Hansen
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**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.

**2022 Meetings:**

- January 17 - 11:00 am
- April 18 - 6:00 p.m.
- **July 18 - 6:00 p.m.**
- October 17 - 6:00 p.m.

**Email Address:**

lbhistoricalsociety@  
lbhistoricalsociety.com

**Website:**

www.lbhistoricalsociety.org  
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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However, everyone likes something different and away from the family living room. At that time people were also looking for new ways to earn a living. By 1815 or so, talented people decided to bring themselves to those seeking new entertainment. One such person, a man named Noah Ludlow, acquired a 25-foot flatboat which he named Ludlow's Noah's Ark. He hired eleven entertainers and they plied the Allegheny, Ohio and Mississippi rivers where they found many customers who came aboard for their performances. In fact, winters were very cold in these areas and people living near these rivers really looked forward to summer and those boats which docked there seeking customers.

Rivers in the state of West Virginia were very popular and Capt. Thomas Reynolds, his wife and nine children frequented them in their boats. They had a moving picture boat and another boat which garnered the nickname of "Showboat".



An Englishman, William Chapman, Sr. built many showboats and also bought a small steamboat to tow his Chapman Floating Theater, as he called it. He usually floated down the Ohio River from Pittsburgh in 1831.

One of the most famous boat owners was Capt. Billy Bryant, called Captain because he was a licensed boat pilot. His last boat, shown above, was built in 1918 and operated until 1942.

The presentations aboard these boats included musicals, comedies, melodramas, and sometimes, even circuses! Those living near rivers always looked forward to these boats docking in their areas. Those desiring fame and fortune, honed their acting skills aboard these showboats every summer.

There was no lodging on these early boats except for the actors and crew but surely the cruise ships of today have evolved from them. First timers didn't know they could decorate their tiny lodging spaces in any way they desired. The second timers all had cute spaces and good lighting. They brought their own lamps the next year.

It was very exciting when the showboats approached their destinations. The musical strains of their presence was audible for miles around due to the powerful steam calliopes on board. Locals clamored to get to the docks to check on "show times". These audiences were just waiting for their entertainment to pull into port.

### **Chatauquas**

This second part of this quarter's feature story doesn't have anything to do with the showboats but was an important movement of its' day also. We never think about how isolated we really were before the advancement of communications. We have to give society an E for effort in trying to keep itself in the know, so to speak.

During the "moving west days", a group of men in tiny towns without newspapers, would band together every few weeks and travel by horseback or wagon to the nearest and largest town from them and buy excess newspapers and also talk to the residents and bring a report back to their area. Everyone always wanted news on what was happening in Washington and what the president was doing.

By the latter part of the 20th century, the Chatauqua movement (sha TAW qua) came up for educational purposes. It's actually an Iroquois word which means two moccasins tied together or "jumping fish". It's thought the description is somehow tied to the Chautauqua lake in New York. Also tied to Protestantism, it was sort of a summer school begun for Sunday School teachers.

It also began to include other adult education of all kinds, and was a way to bring "a college outlook" to working and middle-class people. We're never too old to learn. This movement moved through all denominations and all areas.

The principle expression of the movement became the circuit or traveling chatauqua. There was a Bureau in Atlanta called the Alkahest Chatauqua System and in 1914, it wanted to arrange a chain through Louisiana and Mississippi. On January 10, two representatives, Russell Bridges of Atlanta and Wayne P. Sewell, came to Gulfport to establish the movement here and have it operational by late spring or early summer.

It had already moved into Pensacola, the closest to our area. Although participating cities had to help monetarily, they didn't have to do anything else. There was a wide variety

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of celebrities booked in advance which consisted of doctors, teachers, actors, musicians, opera singers, etc. who were involved in all types of programs.

Although not much is known of the success of that meeting, it is known that before Capt. Joseph T. Jones completed his Great Southern Hotel, which he moved into upon completion, he had been

living in the Chatauqua Building in Gulfport on East Beach. In later years it was known as the East Side Community House. This was a very large building and would have been perfect for the Chatauqua, indeed. Of course, we know this property would later become the home of the Gulfport Library and is now home to the Aquarium.

*The Chatauqua building was renovated in 1938 with funds from the Works Progress Administration. It had been Captain Jones' home in Gulfport before he built the Great Southern Hotel.*



## CONDOLENCES

Sadly, since the last newsletter, we've said goodbye to two long time members. The first was **John Pearson**, who passed in May in Grand Junction, CO, where he relocated to following Hurricane Katrina. A native of Jackson, MS, John and his family moved to Long Beach when he was 6 years old.

After graduating from Long Beach High, John finished his education at State and was commissioned into the US Army and focused on the Corp of Engineers during that time until his retirement from military service. His Engineering career took him to Saudi Arabia where he was the Construction Manager for a Naval Forces community and an international airport there.



John was a valuable member to our society and loved it so that he chose to join another in Colorado. However, this new one was different and very interesting. It was the Durango Railroad Historical Society. As a member, John took pleasure in scraping rust off of 120 year old iron horses, among other duties.

He also enjoyed keeping up with Long Beach through Smoke from the Chimneys!



Also, **Katherine Justice**, widow of Gordon Justice. Katherine eventually left Long Beach to live in Morton MS and she has certainly been missed by her friends here in "The Friendly City" which includes the members of the society.

She was an asset as Treasurer of the society considering her business experience as bookkeeper at Long Beach Drug Store, Jones Brothers in Gulfport, and office manager of Ter Chemicals in "the Pass". At one time she had also been a tele-type operator for the city of Hattiesburg.

Like many of us in retirement, Katherine enjoyed being with her family and pets as well as gardening, sewing, reading and playing on social media, a great way to see and keep up

with old friends. She also enjoyed attending historical society meetings and we enjoyed having her here.

Katherine has three children, three siblings, grandchildren and great grands left to cherish her memory.

We are also saddened by the death of **Charles Gray**, the Executive Director for Life at the Hancock County Historical Society. He held every office possible in that group which he actively and proudly served until the end of his life.

Charles gladly accepted an invitation to speak at one of our meetings, and we were all enthralled with his presentation, which was very comprehensive. He not only spoke about his society, but about the unusual and fabulous restaurant in New Orleans, Corinne Dunbar's. His partner, Jimmy Plauché had purchased the place from the Dunbars, to whom he was related.



Actually, his program was the first in our building and we sat on donated mismatched chairs. Not long after the meeting, Charles even donated a printer to us and invited us to call him in times of need. He was always very gracious in answering any of our questions and also invited the officers over for tea at the Kate Lobrano House, the headquarters of "The Bay" society, a building which he acquired, by the way. He passed on some good information to us that day.

The last time I saw and talked to Charles, was a few years ago and we were both having

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lunch at Harbor View. I spoke with him for a few minutes when he and his party passed my table upon leaving. I thought it was cool that he and his friends had chosen our city in which to have lunch. He will be sorely missed.

Condolences also to the family of **Pat Newcomb**, widow of Les Newcomb, who passed earlier in the year. Born in San Antonio, TX, Pat was raised in Hathorn, MS near Columbia. She was the mother of three daughters, Barri Van Coulter, Laura Newcomb and Elizabeth Lukes and other extended loved ones through Les. Although not a member of the society, the well known, retired school teacher and longtime resident of Long Beach, had very deep roots in the history of the city. She was a direct descendent of James Cable who moved to Long Beach in 1887, according to the Daily Picayune in New Orleans. Mary Ellen Alexander quoted some of these facts in *Rosalie & Radishes*. James was the brother of George Washington Cable, the famous fiction writer and lecturer. It has been recorded that his writings about the South made the world conscious of New Orleans and were responsible in some measure for the first major tourist trek southward.



The Cable and Quarles families were neighbors whose children played together. There was some space between the two homes as the Cables owned the future school property from Railroad St. to Allen Rd. This property was formerly owned by Will McCaughan, Harper's brother.



James Cable, from Long Beach, Beth Hansen's Great grandfather, E. B. Lyman, Gulfport, an unidentified black man from Brookhaven. They are visiting at the 21st Annual Meeting of the United Confederate Veterans in Little Rock. The black man followed the Reunions.

## CURRENT EVENTS

### Our Calendar

We are working on the calendar and the theme is on our Postal System here in the city. There have been many locations since the inception of the service. One location was inside the McCaughan Home, others were in tiny corners of merchandise stores.

Sometimes the Government temporarily discontinued the service if business was slow and residents had to pick up their mail in neighboring cities.



Grabbing the mail bag as train speeds by!

### Old Spanish Trail Re-Enactment

We are going to participate in the Old Spanish Trail Re-enactment on Aug 20, 2022.



The Long Beach Motorcade will meet the Gulfport Motorcade at USM and take the lead from Gulfport and arrive at the designated area at Walmart Super Center where the Pass Christian Motorcade cluster will assume the lead.

More about this at the meeting.



Dues are due every January, unless you recently paid or recently joined.

**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](http://www.lbhistoricalsociety.org/members)

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

Dues paid in October, November, or December will not expire until December 2023.

Find more at [lbhistoricalsociety.org](http://lbhistoricalsociety.org)



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