



# Long Beach Historical Society

Remembering the past to preserve our future

October 2025

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## America's 250

The Spanish began exploiting the Americas in the late 15th century. By the mid-18th century, their empire stretched from California to the southern tip of South America. By the time of the American Revolution, Spain was the largest colonial power in the Americas.

At the beginning of the Revolution, Spain controlled Louisiana and its capital port city, New Orleans. Britain controlled East and West Florida, which Spain had traded for Havana after the Seven Years' War. British colonization of these territories was limited by the climate and the powerful native communities in the area, including the Creeks, Chickasaws, and Choctaws.

The Spanish declared war on Great Britain in 1779 in part to recover lost territory, although Spain never formally allied with the United States. Shortly after, the enterprising governor of Spanish Louisiana, Bernardo de Gálvez, launched an aggressive campaign along the Mississippi and the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, attacking the British at Baton Rouge and Mobile.

Some of the most diverse campaigns of the American Revolution unfolded along the Gulf Coast. At the 1781 Siege of Pensacola, the capital of British East Florida, Gálvez led Spanish and French regulars, Creek and Choctaw warriors, and colonial troops, including a battalion of free Black men from Havana. Inside the city, the British regulars joined German auxiliaries, Choctaw, Creek, and Chickasaw warriors, as well as American loyalists from Pennsylvania and Maryland. Many current residents can count their ancestors as patriots from the Gálvez battles. Additionally, British Florida was a haven for the more notorious loyalists who had made themselves loathsome back home.

Spanish success in the Gulf, especially Pensacola, was tempered by other failures. These North American campaigns provided leverage at the end of the war, and the Floridas were returned to Spain. Mississippi and Alabama did not last long under the Spanish, and in Natchez, MS, the US flag was raised over the town in 1897 by Andrew Ellicott. New Orleans was ceded to the US by the Louisiana Purchase.

*(derived from the website of Fort Ticonderoga)*

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Thank you to Paul Jermyn for his engaging slideshow presentation on the history of Long Beach at our July meeting—it was enjoyed by everyone.

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\*\*\* Last newsletter, we had an error. The "Shot Heard Around the World" took place at Concord and not at Bunker Hill or Breed's Hill.\*\*\*\*

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

Published quarterly by the  
Long Beach  
Historical Society

**Officers**

- President - Billy Skellie
- Vice President - Courtney Welsh
- Secretary - Allisa Beck
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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.

**2025 Meetings:**

- January 20 - 11:00 am
- April 21 - 6:00 p.m.
- July 21 - 6:00 p.m.
- **October 20 - 6:00 p.m.**

**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 2025 Long Beach Historical Society Cemetery Tour

On Thursday, September 18th, the Long Beach Historical Society sponsored the Cemetery Tour around dusk at the Long Beach City Cemetery on Girard Avenue and First Street. Volunteers from the Historical Society and students from the Long Beach High School Theater Club portrayed many of our former citizens. The citizens we honored this year were the following: William W. Klein, Josephine Mary Dubuisson, Hattie Aline Doherty, Mary Ellen Alexander, Mary Abarr, Thomas "Joe" Reeves, Angela Nanette Beland, and Angela Monique Cuevas Ladner. We were pleased to have a very good crowd this year. Our new board was very involved, and we want to thank our volunteers and the City of Long Beach for assisting with this tour.

## Ken Burns -New Documentary on The American Revolution

Ken Burns, documentarian of the legendary "Civil War Series," has a new 6-part documentary on the American Revolution premiering on November 16th on your local PBS station. This project, in anticipation of America's 250th Anniversary, has been in the works for over 8 years. Much like Burns' depiction and study of the Civil War, this series is as anticipated! As we prepare to celebrate our 250th on July 4, 2026, this series will help us understand the unprecedented events in human history to create the United States of America!

## 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.*

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*The daughter of former Police Chief Harry Kaletsch, one of the young children hanging onto that inner tube during the '47 hurricane, is also a former member of our society, Catherine Kaletsch Woodward. Several years back, Catherine wrote of the experiences for Smoke from the Chimneys, and here is her amazing story again.*

### **The '47 Hurricane September 19, 1947**

Our family moved from Galesburg, Illinois, to Long Beach in 1946. My parents, Harry and Helen Kaletsch moved us here because of my mother's health. My parents operated Plainview Café with my Aunt Phil and Uncle Ed Kaletsch. We all lived in the tourist court on the property. There were about 10 cabins and the main office was in the owner's home, a large house on pillars.

We all knew that a storm was coming. The radio broadcasts out of New Orleans warned of a storm coming in the morning and to stay if you had shelter. This was the Hurricane of '47. There was no sand beach and the water came up to the seawall. We anticipated a storm surge, and as a precaution we put all the chairs and stools on top of the counter so they would not get wet.



During the height of the storm, the Gulf invaded our home. The water covered everything and got deeper. Everyone gathered in the main house. We were all in the kitchen at the rear of the house discussing what to do. My parents were worried the house would be pulled out to sea when it was washed off the pillars.



**Plainview and Kaletsch home before '47 Hurricane.**

There were eight of us in the house. The water began to inch up, and soon we were in waist deep water. As we stood in the kitchen we could hear the waves crashing and breaking the windows. My dad decided we had to get out of the house.

None of us were prepared to leave the safety of a building. My parents, my brother Nub, and I, along with a family friend Reggie McCaughan, decided to abandon the house. We were preparing to exit the back door when a large bobcat tried to swim in the door. Daddy and Reggie managed to scare him away before he could get in.

Luckily, as we came out Dad found a small inner tube. Five of us clung to it while floating in 20 feet of water. The creosote treated lumber stored under the house smelled terrible and left a horrible taste when the water splashed in our mouths. While we were hanging onto this tube, a water moccasin swam by and wrapped around my mother's neck. Dad somehow managed to grab it and fling it away. My uncle and aunt, with their one-year-old son Danny, did not leave the house when we did. The water chased them to the attic and then the rooftop. They went from cabin roof to cabin roof until they were forced to get in the water.

Four hours later we were able to get to land at the railroad track near the area where Green Acres is today. I could not move my arm from holding onto the inner tube for all that time. I did not know how to swim! When the storm was over everyone gathered at Jeff Davis School to check on survivors. My uncle and his family were safe. We were saddened to learn that our housekeeper had drowned.

Our homes and businesses did not fare well during the storm. The only thing left of Plainview Café was the cement slab. Everything was gone! We were homeless and had lost all our possessions. All we had were the clothes on our backs. Billy Triplett (Triplett-Day Drugs) and his wife Sara took us in. We stayed with them until we could make arrangements to leave. The women and children of our family left by train to Illinois while my dad and uncle stayed in Long Beach to find work and housing. We returned in about a month. My brother and I had to go back to school.

# Old Clippings from

## LONG BEACH 11 GET LETTERS

GULFPORT, Jan. 21 — Eighteen members of the 1940 Long Beach Bears who participated in the football schedule of the Gulf Coast Region, received letters in recognition for their successful campaign, under Coach Sankey Koen. Those receiving letters were:

Captain Jeff Fayard, Godfrey Fayard, George Bosarge, Louis Gaddy, Felix Bertucci, backs; J. Eddie Simmons, Clarence Feeney, Vernon Mott, ends; Ezra Head, Donald Ikerd, Floyd Thompson, tackles; Frank Delorence, Celestine Fayard, Roy Johnson, Billy Crisman, guards; Vincent Dauro, Landry Jones, centers, and Team Manager William Skellie.

## Long Beach Stirred Over Practice Indulged in By Mischievous Boys

### GULFPORT

A Gulfport physician received a hurry call to long beach a few days ago and when he reached the hard surfaced road near the turn ran his machine over tacks thrown upon it by mischievous boys and two punctured tires resulted. The delay thus occasioned covered more than an hour and the visit of the physician finally had to be made on an electric car. Fortunately he was able after all to save the life of a mother and child. Residents along the coast are very much stirred up over the devilish practice of the boys throwing tacks over the highway in Long Beach and if they are ever found will be made to feel the severest penalty of the law whether they are old or young. The tacks used are of the larger size and are calculated to do great harm to automobiles.

Other complaints have been made by motorists who have also suffered from tire troubles resulting from tack punctures.





# the Daily Herald

## LONG BEACH'S OFFER PRACTICALLY ASSURES GIRLS' COLLEGE FOR COAST

The offer made by the people of Long Beach to subscribe \$25,000 to the girls' college which Col. J. C. Hardy contemplates establishing on the coast, has given definiteness to the proposition. Incidentally it shows that the Mississippi Coast has its eyes open to the main chance and is not passing up anything that would mean so much to its general development as the college proposed by Col. Hardy.

When seen yesterday about the offer of Long Beach, Col. Hardy expressed pardonable gratification. It means, he said, the practical assurance of the school. There are several handsome sites in Long Beach and the people have shown commendable enterprise in seeking to secure the school.

However, Long Beach, it is learned, is not the only contender for the school for Pass Christian has also voiced a willingness to secure it and will doubtless back up its wishes in the premises with a substantial offer. Pass Christian also has a number of suitable sites and would consider itself extremely fortunate in being chosen by Col. Hardy. It is not improbable that sharp rivalry will soon be evident between the towns which would like to be the home of the new school. A school such as that contemplated by Col. Hardy is one which

any community might eagerly reach for.

"Things are shaping up nicely," said the colonel yesterday. "So very nicely in fact," he added, "that I have been making plans for the buildings which, in their entirety, will make a thoroughly modern as well as handsome school plant." The buildings will be of brick and the plan is such that additions can be made from time to time without detracting from the harmony of the whole. The initial plant will cost about \$100,000 and will accommodate 150 girls, but provision will be made to meet an increase of about fifty new girls a year until the annual attendance reaches approximately 500 pupils. The school will be complete to the minutest detail and will not only be a joy to the pupils but an ornament to the coast and state.

### COAST WILL REJOICE

The coast will rejoice to know that Col. Hardy has perfected his plans to that extent where he can speak of his school as almost a certainty. His residence of six years on the coast and his presidency of the Gulf Coast Military Academy have both shown that he is a citizen worth holding on to, and a school man of large ability to whom success is no stranger.

## LONG BEACH SOLDIER WOUNDED

Ed Zimmer, a Long Beach soldier who took part in the Chateau Thierry fight is now at Washington recovering from a wound which he received.

Mr. Zimmer's parents were notified of his wound but its character was not disclosed.

Young Zimmer now writes that the shot struck him in the lower leg, shattering his shin bone. Just as soon as his condition will permit, he will be sent back home.

## **Dues paid in October will be for 2026.**

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

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

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

