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A History of Ellington Field
Defender of America’s Gulf Coast
by Kathryn Morrow

The guest speaker for our April meeting will be Kathryn Morrow. A native born Texan who brings a very diverse background to the subject as she has been on the Landmark Designation Commission, City of Longmont, Colorado, member of the Colorado State Historical Society, Co-Founder of the Railroad Depot Museum, Harrah, Oklahoma, founder of the Black Family Research Association, professional researcher and historian at the North Carolina Department of Archives and History, as well as a college teacher in North Carolina and Oklahoma before arriving in Texas.

Ronnie Richards

April news was both bad and good. We lost two long time League City residents that were a big part of the city’s history with the passing of Artrude Hinte and Lloyd Medsger, Sr. Both were born in League city early in the last century. Artrude was a granddaughter of George Washington Butler. Lloyd was a very active member of the League City Historical Society and will be dearly missed.

On the good news side the League City Council recognized the Society and its One Room School House project at their regular council meeting April 14. Richard and Catharin did an outstanding job in preparing and presenting the Power Point. In addition they informed the council of the recently received documentation that Fairview Cemetery was recorded as a Historic Texas Cemetery by the Texas Historical Commission. In addition, the Mayor read a proclamation recognizing the 100th birthday of the Butler Building that is a recipient of the League City Historical Society Medallion.

A History of Ellington

Our speaker for April is Kathryn Morrow - Historian, researcher and author of many books, guides who will present a history of Ellington Field and the important role it has played in defending the Gulf Coast.

Calendar

April 30, 2009 – Kathryn Morrow, MA - Defender of America’s Gulf Coast - A History of Ellington Field

West Bay Common School Children’s Museum
210 Kansas, League City
Refreshments 6:45pm Meeting 7:00pm

May 28, 2009 – Shirley Brandt - The History of NASA and JSC.
Ronnie Richards called the meeting to order with 20 members present. He announced that the membership dues are due this month.

Richard Lewis introduced the speaker. Susan Fineman is the Schoolmarm at a one-room schoolhouse in Nashua, New Hampshire. In 1976, her Museum began a living history program for school children, similar to ours. There were approximately 219,000 one-room schoolhouses in 1900.

Catharin Lewis gave her Museum report. There have been 19 classes this month. Teddy Bear Parade will be held on July 4.

Debbie Gammon reported about the Ghosts of the Past, which featured WWII Veterans. Eighty people attended, and enjoyed it.

Oak Tree committee is working with 3 schools, where we will donate oak trees. We will use the actors from Ghosts of the Past to tell the history.

Dedication and renaming of the Dr. Ned and Fay Dudney Nature Park will be held on April 4 at 11:00 A.M.

We are invited to give a presentation to the city council on April 14 at 5:45. All are invited.

Fairview Cemetery received a Cemetery Destination Certificate from Texas for the preservation of the cemetery. Cemetery records are on file at the Museum.

The museum added one more book to the collection this past month. We wish to thank author, Jenny Moss for the recent donation of her book entitled, Winnie’s War. We also wish to thank the Heritage Museum in Houston for their recent donation of several copies of Life Magazine. I am in the process of cataloging the collection and creating a data research base to be used by other museums.

I made a presentation before City Council and announced two awards. We are proud to announce that for our cemetery work at Fairview Cemetery was recently recorded as a Historic Texas Cemetery by the Texas Historical Commission. We are also proud to announce that we were recognized as a Landmark Schoolhouse on the National Schoolhouse Registry. Both of these latest awards will help increase tourism to the museum and to League City.

I have included several pictures of the property after the recent rain. As you can see we will be working on our drainage problem soon

The LCHS pins will once again be available for $5 at the April meeting. Wearing a pin will be a great way to spread the word about our wonderful society.

The Museum has been busy in March and much of April. We held 21 sessions with groups coming from Sugarland, Friendswood, Kingwood, Pearland, Texas city, Alvin, Richwood, Galveston, Pasadena, Houston, and League City. We had 782 visitors for the month of March and part of April. We brought in $2,802.00 in program fees and $1,613.65 in gift shop sales and $70 in walk-in donations for the same period.

I3th Annual Angelina College Conference.
July 16 - 17 - 18, 2009
There will be special all-day sessions on Thursday and Saturday, in addition to a wide array of speakers on Friday and Saturday. Genealogy, DNA, or cemeteries, there is something for everyone. For full information and a registration form, visit http://www.angelina.edu/genealogy.htm
Comments or questions, please contact Trevia Wooster Beverly at treviawbeverly@comcast.net or 713.864-6862
We have had over 83,000 visitors since we opened in 1993 and 84% come from outside League City. We will continue to make changes and make things happen. If you want to come and help, we can use your time and talents. Thanks again to my volunteers who help with the daily operations of the Museum and have made all this success possible.

League City Historic District Commission Report

LCHS Rep. to the LCHDC... Fay Dudney

March

- At the March meeting of the Historic District Commission, commission members approved a resident’s request to reconsider the height of a privacy fence from 5’ to 6’5” as allowed in the Architectural Guidelines.

- Denied a request to waive the sign requirements for a Certificate of Appropriateness of a sign permit for a monument sign at 1025 East Main St.

April

- At the April meeting of the Commission, a resident’s request to construct a single-family residence at 709 Coryell Street was approved.

- An applicant’s request for Certificate of Appropriateness for a wall and monument sign for a business at 812 E. Main Street, Suite A, were conditionally approved with the stipulation that the wording on the signs be revised to conform with the Scenic By-Ways Ordinance.

- Commission members discussed how to diplomatically discourage applicants from revising previously approved items without notification to the Commission.

- Beth Schroeder, resident of the Historic District, was introduced as a new member of the Historic District Commission.

his month, the Museum electricity bill was covered by a donation from Dr. Bill and Lori High. During the spring, summer and fall, we have donation opportunities to cover grounds keeping expenses. If you would like to help support the Museum in this tangible way, please feel free to contact Catharin Lewis at 281-554-2994.

Dedication April 4, 2009

We thank Carole Ragland and Kathie Nenninger for providing refreshments for the month of March. Deborah Gammon and Fay Dudney will be providing the refreshments for the April meeting.
Planting History with the Old Oak Tree...

Kathy Weisskopf

Students at two League City Elementary Schools now have historic live oak tree saplings on their campuses.

Fourth and fifth graders at Goforth and at Bauerschlag Elementary Schools have learned about the history of League City’s live oaks, and had the special treat of “meeting” two historic people who once enjoyed the shade of the “parents” of the new saplings.

Three members of the Historical Society, Sherry Frankovich, Diana Dornak and Kathy Weisskopf, provided a program at each school to give fourth and fifth graders insights into local history.

Kathy started each program with a history of League City’s live oaks, explaining that these saplings are “grandchildren” of oaks grown from acorns brought here in 1854 in covered wagons by the cowboys who first settled this area.

Then Sherry and Diana brought historical figures to life! Sherry played Sarah Coward Kipp, and shared her beautiful love story that started during the Civil War and culminated more than 40 years later when she refound her first love. She discovered that he had not been killed battle after all, but had actually survived in a prisoner of war camp. When he came back and found that she had married and moved away, he married, too – and they refound each other by chance 40 years later, after the deaths of both their spouses.

Diana Dornak brought the early and mid-1900’s to life by portraying Lavace Stewart, the teacher and principal for whom Stewart Elementary School is named. She explained that a number of “rough characters” lived in the area at that time, and she had felt the need to carry a gun in her purse during the long wagon rides from her home on the west side of League City to the school in Kemah. She also told of an unexpected visit by Tex Ritter, who sang to her students in exchange for supper at her home.

The fifth graders at Goforth Elementary planted their tree as a parting gift to the school, and also planted a time capsule near it. They plan to come back on July 4 of the year they graduate from high school to see how big the tree is, and dig up their time capsule. Fourth and fifth grade students at Bauerschlag Elementary are also learning about local history through their tree.

Next year students at both schools plan to learn more about the natural science aspects of the live oak tree program. They will look at the benefits trees provide, and learn how to care for them, according to the teachers organizing their programs: Patty Manco at Goforth and Debbie Gabbert at Bauerschlag.

The live oak tree saplings were grown from acorns collected in Helen’s Garden by Historical Society members, and nurtured for several years by Lloyd Medsger and Mike Mize. Their presence at the schools is a tribute to Lloyd – another legacy he leaves behind. When he became too ill to care for them, Mike took over, and continued their care.

The society plans to collect more acorns this fall from Helen’s Garden. Anyone who would like to help raise them for future distribution in the community is asked to call Kathy Weisskopf at 281-554-6317.

Lloyd Medsger
October 13, 1917 – April 9, 2009

Lloyd was an active and supportive member of the League City Historical Society for many years. He was born in League City, Texas; the sixth of eight children born to George and Kittie Medsger, and lived his entire life in League City. He was the last original member of the League City Volunteer Fire Department, a member of Friends of the Library, and had been a member of the League City United Methodist Church for over eighty years. He retired from Amoco in 1982 after forty-one years of service and was known as “Skeet” or “Skeeter” by his many friends there. Lloyd is ever present as a ‘ghost figure’ in our Ice House. He was a city treasure and will be greatly missed by all.

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