April 2016 Newsletter

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Calendar of Events

April 28
“Texas Railroads”
Ellen Ferrill, Curator Galveston Railroad Museum – “Texas Railroads”

May 26
“Historical Outreach Programs”
Joan Malmrose, Dickinson Historical Society

June 30
“Getting on the Right Track to Finding Your Ancestors”
Sue Kaufman, Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research, Houston

July – No Meeting

August 25
“The Crew Left Behind” A report of Jean Lafitte’s crew and their descendants who remained in Galveston and the Bay Area after their captain sailed away.
Lou Graves MacBeth – Lafitte Society of Galveston

September 29
“Galveston County Ghosts”
Dash Beardsley, Ghost Tours of Galveston

October 27
“Haunted League City”
LCDR Joyce Zongrone, USN (Ret.)

November 17
“The History of the Catholic Church in Galveston County”
Lisa May, Archivist, Archdiocese of Houston

December – No meeting

April 28th Speaker

History of the Railroads in Texas and Galveston, the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe in Galveston and the Museum’s Recovery since Hurricane Ike in 2008 Railroads headquartered in Galveston from the late 1800s to 1967

Ellen Rider is the Curator of the Galveston Railroad Museum. Ellen is from Fairhope, Alabama, a small town on the Alabama Gulf Coast. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology from the University of South Alabama and her Master’s degree in Museum Science from the Museum of Texas Tech University. Since joining the Museum in April 2014, she became responsible for new exhibits, displays, research, and rebuilding the archives.

The League City Historical Society meets at the Bus Barn next to the West Bay Common School Children’s Museum 210 Kansas Street, League City ~ 6:45pm Social ~ 7:00pm Meeting

Please continue to keep Richard Lewis in your prayers

Our very own, Richard Lewis, was flown to Methodist Hospital in Houston by Life Flight from Methodist St. John’s Sunday night. He had been hemorrhaging on the left side of his brain most likely due to a fall from a ladder about 5 weeks ago. On Tuesday, Richard finally went in for a very long four hour surgery. The doctor said that he was really pleased with the surgery. Within a couple of hours after surgery, Richard regained coordination and strength on the right side of his body. Richard was released Friday evening and continues to show much progress. He will be in rehab for a number of weeks. He is very cheerful and is doing quite well considering such a trauma.
March 3, 2016 Meeting

Vice-President Mike Peterson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Richard Lewis introduced our guest speaker, Andrew Coleman, from the Galveston Historical Foundation. Mr. Coleman discussed the 1900 storm.

At the time of the storm, Galveston was a booming city. In 1847, the population was 4,000; in 1900, 40,000 people lived there. Galveston served as an immigration port, as well as a shipping port, and was the fourth largest city in Texas at the time. The estimated death toll of the 1900 storm is 8,000-12,000 people. The 6,000 figure we all hear is the number of those who died within the city of Galveston. Cuba’s weather corps had warned of the impending storm, but because they were foreign, their warnings were ignored by Isaac Cline and his boss. Cline had written an article years before saying that Galveston would never suffer great loss from a storm and a seawall was not needed. The wall of debris pushing through the streets during the storm surge killed many. Eventually that debris wall was so large, it actually protected some homes from damage. Clara Barton made her last trip to a disaster site when she came to Galveston after the storm. Three thousand six hundred buildings were raised as the channel was being dug and the seawall constructed. These projects took 10 years to complete. Galveston never regained its success as a port city, becoming instead a resort city.

Meeting adjourned.

MEMBERSHIP DUES NEWS
Effective April 23, 2016

The Board of Directors of our Historical Society recently appointed a committee to review the current membership dues structure and research the dues of other organizations similar to ours. The committee’s objective was to bring membership dues in line with our costs that have increased every year and to offer members more options to financially support the Society. The Membership Dues Committee consisted of Doug McKee our President, Catharin Lewis, our Museum Director/Curator and One Room School Director, Helen Hodges, director, and Ronnie Richards, Immediate Past President and director.

The committee met and developed a new dues structure, which after many years of remaining unchanged, included a small increase necessitated by continuing cost increases. In addition, new membership levels were added to allow members and businesses to support our organization at higher levels if they desired. The Board of Directors approved the following Membership Dues schedule for 2016 beginning April 28th:

### CATEGORY

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<th>Membership Level</th>
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<td>Student/Active Military</td>
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<td>Senior Couple</td>
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<td>Single (Individual)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family</td>
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<td>Supporting Patron</td>
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<td>Life Membership</td>
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### BUSINESS CATEGORY

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<td>Business Leader</td>
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Please find the current and new Membership forms attached at the end of this newsletter.
Did you know that …?

By LCDR Joyce Zongrone, USN (Ret.)

Did you know that in the early 1800s, railroads were operating in the northeast while pirates were coming and going through the port of Galveston, but Texas didn’t get its first railroad until 1853?

Early settlers in Texas faced major problems getting around. By the 1850s, most of the populated areas centered around the east and south Texas rivers and the Gulf Coast. Some rivers, such as the Rio Grande, the Brazos, and the Trinity, had steamboat transportation, but most were not deep enough for riverine transportation. Dirt roads were low capacity and impassable in bad weather. Carts pulled by oxen could only hold three bales of cotton and travel a few miles a day at the cost of twenty cents per ton per mile. Things got better from 1836 to 1846 when Texas went from a republic to a state and canals and plank roads were built.

In September 1853, a twenty-mile rail segment from Harrisburg (now a part of Houston) and Stafford’s Point (now Stafford) became the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado Railroad (BBB&C). It became not only the first railroad to operate in Texas, but the second railroad west of the Mississippi River and the oldest component of the present Southern Pacific Railroad. Simultaneously in 1853 the first “union station” in the world was opened in Indianapolis connecting the Terre Haute & Richmond, Madison & Indianapolis and Bellefontaine Railroads.

Three years later, in 1856, the BBB&C Railroad added the first twenty-five mile segment between Houston and Cypress and became the Houston and Texas Central Railway Company (H&TC). By the end of 1861 there were nine railroad companies with 470 miles of track in Texas. Five of the railroads were centered in the Houston area, and all but one ran from either a seaport or river port, resulting in major changes and improvements in Texas’s travel and transportation.

Local newspapers documented railway trips. Houston’s Tri-Weekly Telegraph reported a thirty-five mile trip by stagecoach in December 1854 from Houston to Hockley, following ten days of rain, as taking one and a half days and with an overnight stop. Five months later in May 1857, a similar trip aboard the Houston and Texas Central took one hour and forty minutes.

Three railroads, the Texas and New Orleans Railroad Company, the Eastern Texas Railroad Company, and the Washington County Railroad Company, were completed and opened after the outbreak of the Civil War.

Although most of the Texas railroads did not suffer the destruction inflicted elsewhere in the South, all were in bad physical condition after four years of constant use without materials or manpower for repairs.

In the North, in 1865, George Pullman’s luxury sleeping cars were becoming famous after he loaned one of them to carry the coffin of Abraham Lincoln 1,654 miles to Springfield. Although it was until the decade of the 1870s before any significant new mileage was constructed in Texas, the Houston and Texas Central Railroad was able to resume construction in 1867.

In 1873, since the Galveston, Houston & Henderson Railroad (GH&H) was the only rail link between the two cities, Galvestonians decided to build their own railroad line reaching across Texas to Santa Fe, New Mexico, bypassing Houston. The Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe Railway Company (GC&SF), headquartered in Galveston was operational for 94 years before merging into the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company.

In 1867, the Houston and Great Northern Railroad Company, the first major new railroad to start construction after the war, created strong competition between Houston and Galveston. Construction also began on the Gulf, Colorado and
Santa Fe Railway Company as well as on several shorter railroads, including the Houston East and West Texas Railway Company and the East Line and the Red River Railroad Company.

By the end of 1879 railroad mileage in Texas reached 2,440 miles. The railroad system in eastern Texas was becoming well developed, but there were less than 100 miles of track west of Denison through Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio, and Cuero.

During the 1880s the first railroad systems developed as independently owned Texas companies, but were later bought by outside interests who controlled railroads in other states.

The Southern Pacific acquired an interest in the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio and ownership of the Texas and New Orleans and the Houston and Texas Central, while the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe became a subsidiary of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad Company.

At the beginning of 1900 there were still less than 10,000 miles of railroads in Texas, representing five percent of United States railroad mileage. Twenty-five percent of the national rail system, which peaked in 1916, was built after 1899; however, nearly forty-five percent of the Texas rails, 17,078 miles, were built between 1900 and 1932. Over the next thirty years, new railroads were constructed and in 1911 Texas became the state with the most railroad mileage, a position it still today.

"Riding the Rails" is designed to promote travel to Galveston from Texas cities and towns once linked by the Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe Railway Company. Operating from 1873 to 1965, the rail line connected small towns and transported passengers, cattle, lumber, grain, and cotton to and from Galveston.

Visit the Galveston Railroad Museum website at: http://www.ridingtherails.info/index.html
President Roosevelt’s favorite Sagamore Hill Sand Tarts

Sweets, especially cookies, were a Roosevelt weakness. The President gobbled cookies such as these sand tarts as fast as they appeared on the plate. This recipe, particularly cherished one in the family, was found on the inside cover of one of Edith Roosevelt’s many cookbooks. The family offered these cookies to friends who dropped in Christmas morning. Serve with hot coffee.

A special thank you to Trevia Beverly for the following:

A Recipe For Sagamore Hill Sand Tarts

Ingredients
Butter - Sugar - Eggs - Vanilla - Flour
Cream 1 cup butter until it is as smooth as mayonnaise. Then add 2 cups sugar and cream until light and fluffy. Add 2 eggs, one by one, beating after each addition.
Beat in one additional egg yolk and 2 teaspoons vanilla. Stir in 4 cups sifted flour.
Mix again well. Roll the dough on a lightly floured board until quite thin.
Cut with a 2-1/2-inch cookie [cookie] cutter. The beat remaining egg white just enough to stir it up a bit. Brush the egg white on top of the cookies. Sprinkle with a cinnamon-sugar mixture and bake on a greased cookie [cookie] sheet in a moderate (350 degrees F.) oven for about 8 minutes.

Makes 6 dozen.” ---Presidents’ Cookbook, (p. 357-358)
2016 League City Historical Society

Dues form good until April 28, 2016

Dues for various types of memberships are as listed below.

Choose the membership level that is best for you. Complete the form below and mail it with your check.

Mail to: League City Historical Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 1642
League City, Texas 77574

☐ $25 Single Membership
☐ $40 Family Membership
☐ $15 Senior Citizen Membership (65 years old and older)
☐ $50 Organization Membership
☐ $250 Life Membership

Note: If you have paid your dues in October 2015 or later, you are current for the year 2016.

Please update your membership information.

Name ________________________________________________________________

(If Family Membership, please include names of family members.)

Address ________________________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State __________ Zip __________

Phone: Home Phone ___________________________ Cell Phone: ___________________________

email address ________________________________________________________________

☐ Check if your name, address or email has changed recently.

☐ Check if you would like to receive your newsletter, meeting minutes and/or meeting notices by email, to help save on postage.
2016 Dues Form
League City Historical Society
Effective April 28, 2016

Thank you for being a member of the League City Historical Society. It is time to renew membership for 2016. Dues for various types of memberships are as listed below.

To renew your membership, choose the membership level that is best for you, complete the form below and mail to LCHS, P. O. Box 1642, League City, TX 77574. You may also bring renewal and check to the next meeting.

### CATEGORY
- Student/Active Military: $20
- Senior (60 and over): $25
- Senior Couple: $35
- Single (Individual): $35
- Family: $50
- Supporting Patron: $100
- Life Membership: $400

### BUSINESS CATEGORY
- Business Member: $100
- Business Partner: $200
- Business Leader: $300

Please update your membership information.

Name: __________________________________________

(If Family Membership, please include names of family members.)

Address ________________________________________________________________

City________________________State_____________Zip________

Phone: Home Phone________________________Cell Phone: ________________________

email address: __________________________________________________________

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