February 23rd Meeting

Audrey Barrett Cook, author of Obedience Smith: (1771-1847) Pioneer of Three American Frontiers, Her Ancestors and Descendants, will be the speaker at the February 23rd meeting of the League City Historical Society. Ms. Cook’s book, published in 2008 is the result of 10 years of research on a lady who not only lived on the North Carolina and Tennessee frontiers, but helped in the settlement of Houston. Her son, Benjamin Fort Smith, fought at San Jacinto. Her grandson, Col. Frank Terry led the Terry’s Texas Rangers during the Civil War. Another grandson, David Smith Terry, was a judge in California and a son-in-law, Gov. Hiram Runnels of Mississippi both had colorful tenures in office.

This fascinating family has been carefully and thoroughly researched by the determined Ms. Cook, who is not a descendant, but an interested party because she currently lives on property that was part of the Obedience Smith land grant in downtown Houston. Come out and enjoy discovering this little known story of Texas history. Ms. Cook will have her books for sale for the price of $43.25 (which includes tax) which she will gladly autograph.

The social portion begins at 6:45 with the meeting beginning at 7 pm. Please feel free to invite guests.

I attended several presentations regarding the Main Street Implementation which focuses on Main Street and League Park in the Historic District in January. There are a lot of great ideas that came out of the study the city conducted using grant funds. However there were some real concerns among many regarding traffic lights, road changes, parking and so forth.

Evelyn Garland our newest board member has volunteered to arrange for our speakers this year. I want to thank her for that but let her know Joanna Sharp Dawson, Richard Lewis and I have set the bar very high over the past several years.

Did you know League City is celebrating its 50th Anniversary as an incorporated city this year? A number of events are taking place to celebrate this occasion including several in March. The first event is a Chili Cook-Off March 3rd in League Park from noon until 4pm. A Golden Anniversary Gala is set at South Shore Harbor Resort and Conference Center March 10th from 6 pm until 11 pm. For more information please visit LeagueCityEvents.com or call 832-704-1110. There are still tickets available.

from the President...

Ronnie Richards
Meeting Minutes

Diane Kerkhove

LCHS January 26, 2012 Meeting

Diane Dornak presided over the opening of the meeting at the school house. One visitor and 9 members were present.

Diane Kerkhove read minutes of the November 17 Meeting. Evelyn Garland motioned to accept the minutes, which were approved.

Diana reported on Holiday in the Park. She praised the success of the float and the booth. About sixty dollars worth of booth items, about eighty dollars worth of calendar sales, and about two hundred dollars of home tour tickets were received. Diana reported success of money made for signs and banner will be used again for other events. The home tour had fewer attendees. Printed histories of homes for visitors were available. She suggested that next year a ticket and brochure be printed on the same piece of paper to save money. She reported that success is making an organization simple and consistent each year.

Grant money to print for the walking tour brochure is not done, however. Up to $2,000 is allowed for 5 houses and the school.

The program consisted of shared stories of long ago. Diana provided 5 door prizes.

Refreshments were provided by Ernie Randall.

Meeting was dismissed.

MusNews

Catharin Lewis, Director / Curator

No snow in January, but we started to get the much needed rain to help fill the drought.

A few groups shared in the Museum schoolhouse program and we added a new staff person as well as enjoyed the return of our volunteer staff to help in the daily operations of the museum. Mary Kate Jordan joined our staff in January to train as an assistant. She comes with a Masters Degree in Agriculture and Extension Education. Kate, as we call her, shares her education experience and will add the new dimension of science to our evening and summer programming that we are in the plans of developing. Watch for more information to come about these new programs in next month’s newsletter. We look forward to working with her and hope this part time position works well for her also.

The first Saturday in February we held another Open House. Visitors who ventured out in the rain enjoyed the talents of Sherry Frankovich, quilter; Garet Nenninger, stained glass artist; Mike Conwell, leather worker and John Dupla, branding iron worker.

Visitors also heard students from Bauerschlag Elementary share their immigrant speeches. The afternoon program included a dedication of our new lamp posts, marking the completion of the project.

Our next project will be a Garden Classroom where we are having a brick patio laid in our bench area. The old benches will be replaced with new allowing donators to have their names or dedications engraved onto the benches. We already have an Eagle Scout, Alex Hester, working on the plans for the brick patio. We also have funding for two benches. We received a wonderful donation from Lunar Rendezvous for one bench and memorial funds have come in honor of Walter Lewis for another bench. Walter Lewis had given Richard and me the seed money initially to start the museum in 1991. If you are interested in donating to the Garden Classroom project, please contact me at the museum. We plan to have a roof with outdoor fan and electricity and gardens planted on two sides of the patio. This will provide shelter for our growing numbers of visitors as well as space for other outdoor programming. We hope to have this project completed by early summer.

Groups and classes are encouraged to register for our schoolhouse programs. Registration can be by phone or on our web site and there is a fee for the program.

Walk-in visitors are always welcome and there is no fee for your visit.

We are planning Natural History Nights, once a month for Family Night at the Museum, beginning March 8th from 7 – 8:30 pm. Look for the flyer in this newsletter.

A Special Welcome to Our New Members

Eileen Herrington
Chris & Beverly Mallios
Rich, Kimberly, Gordon, Dante & Mia Benoit
Carol Bollman
League City Historic District Commission Report
LCHS Rep. to the LCHDC
...Fay Dudney

Special Session with Planning and Zoning Commission and Historic District Commission

January 30, 2012

Tony Allender, Director of Planning and Research provided a presentation on the proposed Main Street Implementation Plan. He prefaced the presentation stating that all residents would not be happy with decisions being proposed to meet some of the goals of the implementation plan to make Main Street and the surrounding areas a destination, and to meet Roger Brook’s “10-10-10” rule for the right mix and number of businesses in the area.

Mr. Allender discussed the changes that were made to the implementation plan based on public comments previously received. He further stated that the traffic signal will remain at Iowa Avenue, that there will be studies and tests conducted in regards to changes to Park Avenue.

Mr. Allender stated that staff is looking into improvements that can be done in-house relatively soon.

Traffic flow and parking options were discussed.

During public comment time, concerns were voiced in regards to the closure of Park Avenue, removal of the traffic light at Houston Avenue, traffic flow, overflow parking options and enhancing the neighborhood’s character.

Mr. Allender is of the opinion that there is no perfect solution, but changes will be necessary to meet the goals of the proposed plan.

The amended proposed plan has since been approved by the Planning Commission and is listed on the City Council agenda for a vote on Tuesday, February 14, 2012.

The Bernardo Plantation Update

LCHS has had several programs regarding League City's Groce Family and the excavations at their historic family home at the Bernardo Plantation.

The Bernardo Plantation Archaeological Project’s historian, James V. Woodrick, has just published a book titled Bernardo: Crossroads, Social Center and Agricultural Showcase of Early Texas and is now available at Amazon.

You may order a copy from Amazon through the Houston Archeological Society’s on-line mall and at the same time generate a donation to HAS at no additional cost to you.

Here’s how:
2. Go to the box that says “search for a cause” and type in Houston Archeological Society; then Search.
3. The HAS logo and name comes up as the first “cause”.
4. To the right of the HAS mall box, click on the bar that says “make this my cause”.
5. Another page comes up with the HAS logo and name. Directly under the logo are two bars: ONE says to get a desktop icon and the SECOND says to bookmark this site. (if you click both these bars, it will be easier for you to log on the HAS mall in the future as a favorite).
6. There are a row of tabs at the top of the page. Click on the “merchants” tab and select the merchant “Amazon.com”. The merchants are in alphabetical order.
7. If you click on Amazon.com, a merchants page will come up with the HAS logo and name. Directly under the logo are two bars: ONE says to get a desktop icon and the SECOND says to bookmark this site. (if you click both these bars, it will be easier for you to log on the HAS mall in the future as a favorite).
8. Then to go shopping at Amazon, just click on the vbar that says “Shop Now”. This will take you to the Amazon’s web-site to go shopping.
9. From there on, you will be shopping on Amazon's web-site...but everything you purchase will result in a percentage donation to the Houston Archeological Society.

There are hundreds of merchants participating in the mall, and you can cause a donation to be made to the Houston Archeological Society at no additional cost to you each time you shop. HAS thanks you for your consideration by shopping www.we-care.com.
Become a Supporting member of the
League City Historical Society

2012 Dues Form
League City Historical Society

Thank You for being a member of the League City Historical Society. It is time to renew membership for 2012. Dues for various types of memberships are as listed below.

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

☐ $25 Single Membership
☐ $40 Family Membership
☐ $15 Senior Citizen Membership
☐ $50 Organization Membership
☐ $250 Life Membership

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.

New Museum Showcases
Galveston’s Legendary Pirate
Jean Lafitte

Pirates! Legends of the Gulf Coast is a pirate-themed family experience.

Long ago pirates roamed the seas of the Atlantic and the Caribbean, many made their way to the Gulf of Mexico sailing to the Yucatan, and eventually to the shores of Louisiana and Texas. One of the most famous pirates to sail the Gulf also made Galveston his home for a period of time. Jean Lafitte, a Frenchman of questionable values, took New Orleans by storm, help defend our nation under Andrew Jackson’s command in the Battle of New Orleans, then sailed away from the shores of Louisiana settling on a magical island....Galveston.

According to pirate folklore, Lafitte built a bright red mansion called the ”Maison Rouge” which he later burned to the ground along with most of his entire encampment when he was ordered to vacate the island by the United States Navy. It is also said that Lafitte interacted with Jane Long who is known as the ”mother of Texas” and was in residence on Bolivar peninsula while he occupied Galveston and interacted with the famous Karankawan Indian tribe as well as Texas hero Jim Bowie.

With artifacts, costumed mannequins, and tour guides dressed in pirate garb, the museum highlights the cultured and debonair Lafitte and his sinister Comrades. ”He was a very complicated Character. His arrival in New Orleans was mysterious- it wasn’t really known if he was from France or the Caribbean,” explains Joyce McLean, owner and a past president of the Historical Downtown Strand Seaport Partnership.

Pirates!: Legends of the Gulf Coast
2313 Harborside Dr.
Galveston, TX 77550
Phone: (409)762-6677

Hours of Operation
Monday & Thursday: 11am - 6pm
Friday: 11am - 7pm
Saturday: 10am - 8pm
Sunday: 11am - 6pm

http://www.piratesgulfcoast.com/index.shtml
Coming soon to the West Bay Common School Children's Museum!

**Natural History Nights**
Combining lessons from the 1890s with hands-on activities, your family will discover the natural world. Each evening includes games, stories, and crafts that you can take home for your backyard. Programs are designed for all ages, and for your family to enjoy together.

**Topics include:**
March 8\(^{th}\) - Butterflies (make a butterfly feeder)
April 12\(^{th}\) - Birds (make a bird house)
May 10\(^{th}\) - Flowers (plant a variety of native plants to attract nature to your backyard)

7:00pm-8:30pm  
*Cost: $5 per person; children 3 and under are free*

The West Bay Common School Children's Museum  
210 N. Kansas Ave  
League City, TX 77573  
(281) 554-2994  
[www.oneroomschoolhouse.org](http://www.oneroomschoolhouse.org)