February 2015 Newsletter Kathie Nenninger Editor knenninger@verizon.net

February 26th 2015 Meeting

The Improbable Survivor – a young child in the Holocaust

Chaja Verveer was born in the Netherlands in 1941. The Germans had already occupied the country in 1940. In 1942, the Nazis implemented the deportation of Jews to concentration camps.

When Chaja was only one year old, her family of six went into hiding, splitting up because they were too many to stay together in one place. When the non-Jewish family hiding her was betrayed to the Nazis in 1944, Chaja was sent to the Westerbork, a transit camp in northeastern Holland, from where trains regularly departed for the extermination camps elsewhere. In Westerbork, she was placed in a barrack used as an orphanage for children who had been sent to the camp without their parents.

September 13, 1944, the last train left Westerbork. On it were the 51 children from the orphanage. Chaja was one of them. The children arrived in Bergen Belsen, after three grueling days and nights on the train. After three months, the children were sent to Theresienstadt, a ghetto and transit camp in occupied Czechoslovakia. She and the other inmates were finally liberated in May 1945 by the Russians. She was subsequently reunited with her mother and three brothers. Her father had been executed in 1944 for his activities with the Resistance.

In 1961, Chaja emigrated to Israel. She lived and studied in Jerusalem. She also lived in Austria and Brazil before coming to the United States. Chaja worked as a consultant to both the for-profit and non-profit sector. She is married to Jim Getola and has lived in the Houston area for the past 35 years. She serves on the board of Holocaust Museum Houston and has been appointed to serve on the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission. She is also president of Child Survivors of the Holocaust, Houston.

Calendar

February 26 The Improbable Survivor – a young child in the Holocaust with Chaja Verveer
March 26 Dawn to Dusk Fashion Show with J’Nean Henderson
April 30 Architectural Details with Steph Mc Dougual

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

A Special Welcome to Our New Member

Jay Ewend of The Milk Pail

From the President...

Doug McKee

WOW, January came to a close with the LCHS Board meeting held on January 31st. February is fast going by and another LCHS Board meeting will be held on February 21st. I enjoyed seeing and feeling the excitement from all the board members, enthusiasm of new ideas as spirit abounds for LCHS projects. I look forward to seeing things put in forward motion for functions and events in the near future. Here’s knowing this short message in a short month will keep the WOW we have for growing LCHS.
Meeting Minutes
Susan Pierce, Secretary

January 29, 2014 Meeting

President Doug McKee welcomed all members and guests. Our speaker was Richard Lewis, and his topic was the supplies provided for the Civil Defense fallout shelters organized during the Cold War.

In September 1961, President Kennedy wrote a letter published in Life magazine, telling the American people he wanted fallout shelters throughout the country that would support survivors of a nuclear attack. A fallout shelter is specially designed to protect occupants from radioactive debris, or fallout, resulting from a nuclear explosion. It was expected that 97% of us would survive if we were protected during the fallout. Our Barn Museum, now known as the Historic Bus Barn, held our community’s fallout shelter supplies.

Richard and Catharin have collected fallout shelter supplies which we were able to inspect: barrels containing toiletry items, food, water, medical supplies, a radiation detector similar to a Geiger counter, the publications and handbooks concerning fallout shelters, and one of those orange Civil Defense Fallout Shelter signs. The food consisted of crackers and hard candy, supplying 700 calories per day, and one quart of water per person was provided daily. These minimal survival supplies were to take care of 50 people living in the shelter for a 2-week period after a nuclear attack. Richard also showed an old video showing the duck-and-cover program taught to school children in the 60’s. There is a Civil Defense museum in Dallas.

Richard announced that the next time he makes an archive presentation, his subject will be school buses. He briefly discussed the museum’s recent acquisition of a wooden school bus that fits easily onto a farm wagon. The bus is on display at the Historic Bus Barn.

The Minutes were approved, and the Treasurer’s Report was made available for review.

The Historical Society’s Board is having a meeting on Saturday, January 31st, at 9 o’clock.

Catharin Lewis announced upcoming classes. The goal is to have more adult classes, such as the next class on essential oils. Spring-break camps for ages 8-14, from 9:00-4:00, are also planned.

It’s been 7 years since League City’s beautiful oak trees were measured. The trees listed in the Oak Registry are being remeasured, and it will be interesting to see the difference in size after 7 years.

Meeting adjourned.

2015 OFFICERS & BOARD

Doug McKee President
Joyce Zongrone Vice-President
Diana Dornak Treasurer
Susan Pierce Secretary
Phyllis White Corresponding Secretary
Jeff Hansen Director
Helen Hodges Director
Richard Lewis Director
Daryl Krogman Director
Katie Benoit Hake Director
Melodey Hauch Director
Steph McDougal Director
Doris Teets Director
Mike Peterson Director
Ronnie Richards Immediate Past President
Catharin Lewis Museum Curator
Jennifer Wycoff Museum Director

MusNews
Jennifer Wycoff, Director

Hello Members,

Things are going very well at the West Bay Common School Children’s Museum. We have had a lot of visitors as well as successfully fun adult and children’s classes this past month. One of our classes was on “History of Wedding Customs & Floral Design”. It was much fun. The beautiful bouquets we made lasted nearly 2 weeks. We had our first Board Meeting the last day of January and it was a very progressive and insightful meeting. We will continue with a variety of evening classes and keep you posted on the website regarding the schedule.

The “Dolls, Toys & Games” exhibit is complete and is definitely an attention getter. There are a variety of dolls, games and toys with wheels on exhibit. Come visit soon!

Telegram Reveals History

Two days after Galveston’s 1900 storm, a steamship agent, a city resident and a local rabbi sent a telegram to the governor of Texas, begging for help.

This iconic yellow-paper Western Union telegram, which survived as an artifact, was sent to Governor Joseph Sayers and signed by Galveston residents, J.H.W. Steele, H.S. Murray and Rabbi Cohen. Unfortunately, if there was a telegraphic reply, that artifact did not survive. We can only imagine the plea for help was answered.

This 8” by 5” piece of paper is a gateway to an infamous day in history.
Curator’s Corner

....Catharin Lewis, Curator

It is always exciting when new objects are added to our collection, even if it is just one or two items. We now get to explore the history of the object, find out when it was made, by whom and if it is still being made today? We then plan the interpretation, care, and development of the collection. We continue to collect educational artifacts locally as well as around the world. The school memorabilia are not limited to a specific time period. We are also a local history museum and hopefully will become the reservoir for pieces of history in this town’s past. Over the last twenty one years, our collection has grown to more than 4000 items. If you are doing spring cleaning and come across items with “League City” printed on it and want to share, please stop by the museum and make your donations. In January, we added another school book, entitled Frye’s First Course in Geography, to our collection with special thanks to Melissa Aguilar. She also donated a poster entitled, “The Old Schoolhouse”.

Each month, I will highlight the history of one object in our collection. This month we will look at the Columbia High Wheeler, now in a new location that will hopefully catch your eye.

Albert Pope with his father Charles and his cousin Edward opened business on Boston in 1876 and later incorporated in Connecticut in 1877. The Pope Manufacturing Company sold air pistols and cigarette rolling machines. In 1878, Albert invested $4000 to import about fifty English bicycles. Later that same year he contracted the Weed Sewing Machine Company of Hartford, Connecticut manufacture fifty bikes under the first contract. Albert Pope chose the brand name “Columbia” for his own brand of bicycles produced by Pope Manufacturing. These bikes were originally styled after an English road machine, the Duplex Excelsior of the Bayliss, Thomas and Company. Albert was first to apply the principle of interchangeability of parts, which the England business could not boast. Pope bought Pierre Lallement’s original patent for the bicycle and then bought all other bicycle patents he could find. This way he controlled other American manufacturer and charged them royalties. The Standard Columbia with a forty-eight inch wheel was priced at $87.59 and introduced in 1880. Many mishaps occurred and Albert was urged to produce a safety bike because others predicted “the old high wheel was doomed”. Pope did offer a safety model in 1886 but the design retained the high-mount and oversized front wheel. By 1888, Pope produced the Veloce, a new safety bike. After this the company sold only 3000 ordinaries through 1891.
Did you know that …?

By Joyce Zongrone

Did you know that the mass production of artificial ice was developed in Texas?

Throughout history, the only means of refrigeration was ice and snow found locally or brought down from the mountains, packed in cellars, mere holes in the ground, lined with wood or straw. In the early 1800s, the ice trade, also known as the frozen water trade, centered on the East Coast of the United States and in Norway. Natural ice was cut from pond and stream surfaces, stored in ice houses and then shipped by barge or railroad. Ice wagons then distributed their product locally.

The South was initially supplied with ice shipped from New England, in straw-packed ships, through the Caribbean to southern ports. In the mid-1800s, when the railroad came to Texas, Northern ice was packed and transported in sawdust-insulated cars.

When this natural ice supply was cut off during the Civil War, a French Carre absorption machine was clandestinely shipped through a Union blockade into Texas via Mexico. In 1865, San Antonio engineer, Daniel Livingston Holden, invented mechanical ice by redesigning the Carre, which originally used water as an absorbent and ammonia as a refrigerant. He added steam coils and used distilled water to produce clear ice.

By 1867 there were three artificial ice companies in San Antonio with only five other ice plants in the entire United States. In 1869 Holden took out a patent on his design, extending his product across Texas, Louisiana and the South, installing sixty-ton capacity ice plants.

Texas native, Walter Ansell, a Confederate veteran, came to Galveston in 1871, as Secretary and Treasurer of the Texas Ice Company, who shipped ice from Maine and Massachusetts to Galveston. His historic home is still standing at 3702 Avenue M in Galveston.

By 1881 the first mechanically refrigerated slaughterhouse in the United States was successfully operating in Fulton, Texas, chilling and curing beef for shipment to Liverpool, England, and other destinations. This was an economic boon for two of Texas’s most important industries, fish and poultry processing plants, highly dependent on refrigeration.

By 1911, the first home refrigerators were being manufactured by General Electric, selling for around $1,000, nearly twice as much as an automobile at the time.

Refrigerators and freezers became common appliances during World War II, going into mass-production in the mid-1940s.

League City Historic District

Commission Report

LCHS Rep. to the LCHDC

...Fay Dudney

At a public hearing January 15, 2015, the Historic District Commission approved a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace four windows on the north and east sides of a structure at 812 East Main Street (FM 518 and Kansas Ave.) located along the north side of East Main Street.

A request to allow an existing wooden fence securing the rear of a metal building at 804 East Main Street (518) was approved providing the owner would supply landscaping to screen the taller stored items behind the fence from neighbors and mainstream traffic.

Commissioners commented on the Goals and Objectives of the commission discussed at the March and April 2014 meetings regarding Best Management Practices to Implement, and Commission adoption of Design Guidelines to submit to Council for approval.

...from Ronnie Richards

Saturday March 21: League City Park 12:00 – 4:00. This will be a fun event! It’s a fundraiser for Fairview Cemetery, a distinguished and old cemetery in our area with lots of local history. Someone told me that Jim Morrison, legendary lead singer for the Doors, is buried here, but I don’t think that’s true – I think he’s buried in France or somewhere. Anyway, we’re playing in the pretty little park on Main Street in League City, right by the red caboose. It will be a beautiful day, come hear the band and find out more about the cemetery project. Sponsored by the Fairview Cemetery Group.
Simple Machines Day Camp
at the
One Room Schoolhouse Museum
Connecting lessons of the past with the tools of today!

Campers will learn, identify and construct simple machines, and design and build a machine of their own. Days activities include lessons, building machines, take-home crafts and games. Staff 30 years of experience

March 16 – 20, 2015
9am - 4pm

$250 or $70 a day
Grades 3-5
Bring your own lunch and snacks
*Before or after care additional fee

Limited Space
281-554-2994

Register by March 12
210 North Kansas League City
February 12, 2015

Dear Friends of Fairview Cemetery,

Thank goodness our wonderful little corner ‘down by the creek’ has been preserved for posterity in its present state of beauty and peace, as is marked by our State Historical Cemetery marker installed last summer!

Our lovely, quiet cemetery on the banks of Clear Creek is being encroached on from the south by new home construction as League City continues to grow rapidly. The City has predicted a population of 100,000 by the end of 2015, and four new homes have either been finished or started on Seventh Street, across from the Cemetery. The American Legion, in conjunction with the City of League City, continues to hold Memorial and Veterans Day ceremonies here, which are well attended by the public. Because of the rapid growth of the City, we are determined that we must be proactive in taking care of our property accordingly.

We continue to research missing military headstones and do what is necessary to obtain and install the stones, with most of the tedious research done by Deborah Gammon and Melodey Hauch.

Because we are not a perpetual-care cemetery contractually, we must do these perpetual needs ourselves, working together. Observe the beautiful landscaping that the Medsger family has done for the Betty and Lloyd Medsger site.

So, dear friends, we are planning another benefit this year with the thought that we MUST very soon fence at least part of the cemetery, plus we need to run a waterline to at least one additional location. We’re giving you plenty of notice this year so everyone can come and we will have a big crowd. The date is Saturday, March 21, and the site is League Park on Main Street. Please see the enclosed flyer for more details on this event. We would love to see you at our event.

We would be very grateful for a donation to help us accomplish our goals. Please make your checks payable to “Fairview Cemetery Group” and mail it Phyllis White, 804 Bauer Ave., League City, Texas 77573. Thank you.

Proud to be your
Fairview Cemetery Group President,

[Signature]
Joanna Dawson