January 2015 Newsletter Kathie Nenninger Editor knenninger@verizon.net

A Sign of the Times

January 29th 2015 Meeting

Come see how our museum building played a fascinating Civil Defense role for the city of League City 50 years ago. And it wasn’t a fallout shelter, that’s for sure. This is the first in a series called FROM THE ARCHIVES, where you get to actually see, touch and smell artifacts from the museum archives. This month will be like no other you have ever experienced in what artifacts you get to interact with. A truly radioactive story of League City’s history in the 1960’s brought to you by your museum staff. Social time at 6:45 and meeting starts at 7pm in the Historic Bus Barn (formally the Barn Museum).

Editorial Comment:
Since we now have a full sized school bus in the building, Jennifer and Catharin have changed the official name of the Barn Museum to the Historic Bus Barn. It actually was the first CCISD bus barn when they had 3 busses. Now they have 293 and counting.

Calendar

January 28
A Sign of the Times
Presented by the Museum Staff
West Bay Common School Children’s Museum
210 Kansas Street, League City
6:45pm Social ~ 7:00pm Meeting

from the President... Doug McKee

Happy New Year! I was thinking of a word for 2014. WOW, a small word but very powerful when I think of all the accolades, achievements and awards LCHS has acquired in the past year by our members.

I know in 2015 we can use this same word WOW, with future planning and success, as we welcome some new board members as well new members.

In this highly successful society our goals will be management with vigorous changes and challenges. I want us to challenge ourselves to work as a team of historical preservationist, especially within ourselves to move forward in our thoughts and future planning.

I want to thank Ronnie Richards for all the hard work and diligence he put forth through the last six years. He will be a hard act to follow, but as past president he brings to LCHS, experience that we will enjoy for a long time.

I certainly want to thank Jennifer Wycoff for coming on board as director of West Bay Common School Children’s Museum, we all will be wowed by her ability to preserve League City History.

Last but not least, I want to thank every member for their support of LCHS, and for giving me the opportunity to serve as president in 2015. The LCHS Board meeting is (Saturday) January 31, 2015.

Helen Hall Library: eBook Help Sessions
Tuesday, January 27
Learn how to use OverDrive and/or AXIS360 to download eBooks and audiobooks to your device (i.e., tablet, smartphone, laptop). Bring your device and we will help you get started.
November 20, 2014 Meeting

Ronnie Richards welcomed members and guests to the meeting. Phyllis White spoke about the Society’s participation in Holiday in The Park event. Volunteers are needed to donate baked goods and to work in the booth selling those baked goods. The event is December 6-7. Please contact Phyllis if you wish to participate.

Richard Lewis discussed a slight change in his proposed amendment to the Bylaws – a nominee for Director of the Board must be an active member except with the Board’s approval. There was a discussion on this change, and the amendment passed by show of hands. The Officer candidates were voted in unanimously. Our 2015 Officers and those new Directors are as follows:

Officers:
President – Doug McKee
Vice President – Joyce Zongrone
Recording Secretary – Susan Pierce
Corresponding Secretary – Phyllis White
Treasurer – Diana Dornak

New Directors:
Daryl Krogman
Katie Benoit Hake
Mike Peterson
Melodey Hauch
Steph McDougald

Catharin Lewis gave her report and announced staffing changes. Melissa Aguilar will be new Director of Education, Catharin will be the curator, and Jennifer Wycoff (formerly with the Butler Longhorn Museum) will be the museum’s Director. With this staff, Joanna Dawson remarked there is a feel of unification between the Longhorn Museum, the West Bay Common Schoolhouse, Fairview Cemetery, and the Historical Society.

Our speakers, Mike and DeeAnn Peterson, showed a video and spoke of their work in moving and restoring the Captain Meyer House, built in 1905. The house sat on the same spot for over 100 years, and was partially made from wood recovered after the 1900 storm. Captain Meyer was a merchant marine, and the house was later owned by DeeAnn Peterson’s grandfather.

The meeting was adjourned.

Curator’s Corner

...Catharin Lewis, Curator

Change is a popular word in our lives today. I read once that while most people use the word “change” in what will happen in the future; we learn about change by looking at the past. Twenty-one years ago, I helped open this museum. Over this time period, I have seen my own personal transformations, professional growth and changes in this corner property on North Kansas and 2nd Streets in the Historic District of League City. After more than 85,000 visitors, I felt it was time to make a change at the museum.

I started 2014 with a shoulder replacement and the surgery caused major adjustments in my day to day life, even here at the museum. With help from a team of volunteers, we continued our schoolhouse programs and daily operations while I healed. Our evening “Natural History Nights” brought visitors new to the museum and we shortened our camp schedule while my shoulder continued to heal, but those who came still had a meaningful experience.

Looking back, I needed to learn more about League City, to learn lessons in fund raising, marketing techniques, and my approach to others. I felt confident that what I planned would work and given time things would happen. The museum has grown and so have I, but another change was now needed for me, as well as for the growth of the museum. As a founder, it is hard to pass the torch, but it is a necessary step in the process. I am not leaving, but I will continue to be our museum curator and the archivist for Country School Association of America.
considerable experience and leadership in project planning and development. She brings success in fundraising, client relations and artistic design which will complement the work needed at the museum. Jennifer directed the opening of League City’s Butler Longhorn Museum. She has an AA from Mater Dei College, Ogden, NY, and a MA in Art History from Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. Additionally, she holds Texas Association of Museums certifications and a certification in leadership and management development from Dale Carnegie, Houston. She is also the part-time director of the Patrons of Art for the Vatican Museum of the Texas Chapter.

Jennifer comes with Museum experience, creativity and the ability to work with others. She is in training to learn what happens at the one-room schoolhouse and planning what she would like to see change. I am here to encourage her in this new leadership role and see that she can grow too. We are working well together and it is nice after all these years to share my dreams. Please join me in congratulating Jennifer on her recent appointment, which surely will advance and expand the work at West Bay Common School Children’s Museum.

The museum had a very good year. Many thanks to my teaching staff, Sarah Eubanks, Catherine Gill, Melissa Aguilars and Sherry Frankovich. Many thanks to my volunteers, Barbara Vermillion, Doris Teets, Kathie Nenninger, Deborah Gammon, Phyllis White, Irma Dodge and especially my husband Richard.

We have also had a good year financially. Our walk-in visitors donated $5,620.65 and local businesses donated $1600 and $500 of some in-kind services. We received $12,000 from IBM and the George and Mary Josephine Hammon Foundation. We brought in $10,555 in schoolhouse programs and $4,399.71 in gift shop sales. We had over 3100 visitors and held 129 classes with groups coming from 21 cities all over the Houston-Galveston area and Austin and Baytown.

We again want to thank J’Neen Henderson, Gynell Miller, Judy Monthy, Sandra Malmgren, Katie Benoit Hake, Raymond Bartels, Joyce Zongrone, Sherilyn Lewis and Lois Barringer for their donation of many items to our collection in 2014. We appreciate their support in our program. Our mission is to preserve an early Texas school building, provide a “Hands-on-History” experience for children of all ages, to house state and local acquisitions of school memorabilia and educational artifacts, to preserve a historical site and its history of a former two-room schoolhouse, preserve the original structure used as the first fire station and later a school bus barn and to preserve an early business in League City’s Past. We welcome all donations that help share League City’s History with our visitors. We are excited about the New Year and look forward to the growth and changes that we have planned.

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Hello all!

I am excited to be the new Director of the West Bay Common School Children’s Museum and I invite you to visit the new “Doll & Toy” exhibit beginning February 12th. The visitor will experience toys from 1880 to 1930’s their purpose and effect on life today.

There will be two classes for adults starting February 3rd in the evening: “The History of American Weddings”, a creative history and flower bouquet making experience, as well as, the “Creating Essential Oils” with herbs and flowers for medicinal purposes and more. Cindy Schnuriger and her husband Bob, certified teachers for over 36 years, are partnering with us writing new educational programs for classes. These new programs will allow us to create, play and discover while entertaining and educating us. The teachers and staff at WBMS are at work creating intellectual stimulation for every visitor! Come and support our development needs by attending classes. I hope to see you there!

Thank you Ronnie...

The members of the League City Historical Society thank outgoing President Ronnie Richards for his six years of being at the helm of the society. His calm and thoughtful leadership was appreciated by all. We know that he will continue to be a supporter as we work to preserve the history of League City.

Ronnie Richards says goodbye at his final LCHS Board meeting to Catharin Lewis, Curator of the One Room School house Museum.
2015 OFFICERS & BOARD

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<td>Doug McKee</td>
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Did you know that ....? by Joyce Zongrone

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.

The 1900 Storm, accompanied by 120 mph winds and 15 feet of flooding, destroyed two thirds of the buildings in what was then the third wealthiest city in the United States.

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.

**Governor Joseph Sayers**, an attorney, served as Governor of Texas from 1899-1903. During his tenure he not only oversaw the 1900 storm, but also two other notable 1899 disasters, the Texas State Penitentiary Fire and the Brazos River Flood.

In February 1899, the Texas State Penitentiary Fire started in a defective flue between the ceiling and the roof of the school building which joined the prison hospital and the cell building. The fire raged for 48 hours. The unusually cold temperature of zero degrees caused the hydrants and the boiler pipes to freeze. They had to be thawed out before the water could be used to fight the fire. Miraculously, there was no loss of life. In fact, according to *The House and Senate Journals of the Texas Legislature*, four convicts testified to the heroism and professionalism of their prison staff. Convict Estevan Garcia, spokesman for all the Mexican convicts, universally thanked the guards for saving them. Convict J.A. Wright stated he owed his life to those guards.

Convict Will Sides, who worked as a mechanic, was “anxious to prove my appreciation.”

Finally, a convict named Lewis went on record as saying, “the prisoner is in the hands of men of humane hearts and cool heads.” He closed his testimony with “Love and kisses, I remain Lewis.”

Almost four months later, to the day, Governor Sayers found himself in the midst of the June 1899 Brazos River Flood. Within eleven days, the river overflowed its 43 foot flood stage level, flooding 66,000 square miles. A record rainfall of 8.9 inches destroyed 12,000 miles of fertile and profitable farmlands.

This natural disaster was the catalyst for the migration of some of the Italian tenant farmers living in the area. In the late 1800s, Italians along the Brazos numbered almost 3,000. Following the flood, many headed for mainland Galveston County, joining other Italian farmers with established vegetable and fruit farms.

The ‘three Musketeer alligators” put on their final touches before their debut in the 17th Annual League City Holiday in the Park Parade. The West Bay Common Children’s Museum sponsored the float for the Cajun Christmas-themed parade through the Historic District of League City. Catharine and Richard Lewis, along with Museum Director, Jennifer Wycoff, created and built the float. Catharin Lewis, Museum Curator, and Wycoff waved to the crowds along the parade route along with their reptilian friends.
J.H.W. Steele, first signer of the telegram, owner of The J.H.W. Steele Company, was a steampship agent and a ship broker. His headquarters was at 2101 Strand, with offices in Texas City, New Orleans, Savannah, New York, San Francisco and Havana, Cuba.

H.S. Murray, the second signer, has remained in obscurity.

Rabbi Henry Cohen, the third signer, was the prelate of the Temple B’Nai Israel, then located at 2128 Church Street until 1950. Founded in 1868 by German Jewish immigrants, it is the oldest Reform Jewish Congregation in Texas. Rabbi Cohen came to the Temple in 1888 and oversaw its expansion in 1890, when it became a landmark designed by Galveston’s famous architect, Nicholas Clayton. Following the hurricane, Cohen became a member of Galveston’s Central Relief Committee which kept law and order with the “help of shotguns,” while ministering to people of all religions. This 8” by 5” piece of paper is a gateway to an infamous day in history.

__League City Historic District Commission Report__

LCHS Rep. to the LCHDC

...Fay Dudney

November 20, 2014

A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish a residence at 616 – 4th St. was approved. The application now meets the requirements of the ordinance by providing information for the Historic District Commission to follow for this and future similar requests.

No meeting was scheduled for the month of December.

__Forgotten Gateway: Coming to America Through Galveston Island__, a new Humanities Texas traveling exhibition presented in collaboration with the Bullock Texas State History Museum, explores the Port of Galveston’s role in the story of 19th and 20th century immigration to the United States and considers universal themes of immigration including leaving home, encountering danger, confronting discrimination, and navigating bureaucracy. This exhibit makes its SECOND stop at the new location of the Galveston County Museum, 722 Moody (that’s 21st St.) in the Courthouse Lobby. This wonderful story about immigration through the Port of Galveston will be on display from February 9th through March 23rd. Come see us in our new home!

Fairview Cemetery Honors Two WWI Veterans

...Deborah Gammon

Oscar B. Juenger and Frank R. Ellis are two WWI veterans buried in unmarked graves in Fairview Cemetery.

Deborah Gammon following the setting of Oscar Juenger’s headstone

Oscar was one of at least seven children born to Vincent and Katherine Kratzmann Juenger in the late 19th century. Vincent and Katherine had immigrated to the United States from Germany. Two of his brothers, Eddie and Gustave didn’t live to see the Great War. Oscar served in the U. S. Army from April 27, 1918 to June 20, 1919 in Co. E. 360th Infantry.

In 2011, a concentrated effort was made to obtain a Veterans Administration marker for his unmarked grave. This was not an easy task to accomplish. His military records had been “lost” in a fire in 1973 and his service had to be reconstructed. After getting a certificate of his service, his marker was ordered. The problem was that it had taken so long to prove his military service that the Veterans Administration had changed the rules and only a next of kin could order a marker.

While researching his family to find a next of kin, one of the representatives suggested that my only hope was to get a court order. Another member of the LCHS, Joyce Zongrone knew Judge Lonnie Cox and the wheels were in motion for a court order. Galveston County lawyer, Jack Ewing (newly elected Judge of Galveston County Court of Law #3) represented the case in the court of Galveston County Probate Judge Kimberly Sullivan on April 18, 2014 and the order was granted making me Oscar and Frank’s next of kin.
Unfortunately, the VA chose to review the court order and put things on hold. My representative in the VA stressed that I should continue with my research and find a relative of Oscar’s to obtain the marker. This did come about. And, I feel that there was some divine intervention in the case. I attended a marker dedication in Washington Cemetery in October, 2014. I just happened to be seated beside Cathy Fitch, Vice President of Washington Cemetery Historic Trust. During our conversation about the VA markers, I mentioned that Oscar’s parents and 2 siblings were interred in her cemetery and asked if she would check her records for a contact for the Juenger family. A week later, I received an email with a contact address for a granddaughter in Massachusetts. Contact was made with the family and Oscar Juenger’s marker was ordered, received and set on December 20, 2014.

Frank’s case was very similar. Frank had served May 27, 1918 to February 24, 1919 at Camp Travis in Houston. Frank served in 28th Co., 165th Depot Brigade. He had died months earlier in the same year, 1965 as Oscar. They were both buried by the local VFW and forgotten. Frank Ellis had 2 natural siblings and 2, ½ brothers. I again had to have his service reconstructed, prove he was in an unmarked grave through cemetery records and pictures of his space in Fairview. Frank was part of the court order of April, 2014 but also put in review by the Veterans Administration. I continued to research his family and found several descendants of the half brothers. Letters were written to 3 half great grandnieces or nephews. Finally letter #3 received a reply and agreement was made to sign paperwork for Frank. The VA came through again with a VA marker which was set on Friday, January 16, 2015. Ironically, a granddaughter,通过 Frank’s sister, Katie, found me just weeks before Frank’s marker arrived. Michael Zuber began his genealogy detective work in July, 2014 (after the court order). He discovered a link to the wonderful television interview done on the court order by Kevin Reece of channel #11 news. We were in contact with each other just days before Frank’s marker arrived. I met Michael and his twin sister, Pam and mother when the marker was set.

I want to thank Matt Crowder of Crowder Funeral Home for receiving the markers and setting the markers in Fairview. George Loea of Crowder Funeral Home and my husband set both markers.
The History of American Weddings

Join us for a fun filled evening as we explore the history of traditional 1800 weddings.

Tuesday - January 27, 2015
7 - 8:30 p.m.
One Room School House
League City, Texas
Registration: $30/person

- Understand how the wedding dress evolved
- View several wedding dresses from the 1800’s to early 1900’s
- Discover the relevance of traditional wedding customs
- Investigate the traditional wedding bouquets
- Create a hand-tied wedding bouquet with live cut flowers

The class will include real artifacts, documented customs and materials relevant to wedding customs of the 1800 time period. Participants will be instructed how to create a hand-tied wedding bouquet with live flowers. They will be completed with the French knot ribbon wrapping to take home and enjoy as a fresh floral arrangement.

Instructor
Cindy Schnuriger, Certified Teacher
With over 36 years of successful teaching, event planning, curriculum writing and floral designing.
STORIES IN THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE

This Month’s Feature:
Guess How Much I Love You
by Sam McBratney

A special Valentine craft to follow.

Every story is read by a School Marm in an authentic one-room schoolhouse and every session ends with our Player Piano “magically” playing its own marching tune. Pack a picnic lunch and enjoy it at League Park.

Monday, February 9, 2015
9:30am-10:30am or 11:30am – 12:30pm
3 – 5 years (accompanied by parent; younger siblings welcome)
Cost: $4.00/child

Groups of 5 or more children must pre-register.
Space is limited; registration by 2/6/15 suggested.

210 North Kansas, League City, Texas 77573
Register by calling museum: 281-554-2994 or online at

www.OneRoomSchoolhouse.org