Starting January 31, the League City Historical Society is teaming up with the Helen Hall Library to present a series of programs with a local, Texas, or American history theme. This series will be called “The History Club” & will replace our normal monthly meeting. Each topic will be presented on the last Thursday of each month from 7 to 8 p.m. in the library theater. The first program, held on January 31, is based on the Warships at Seawolf Park. Local authors Col. Kelly Crooks and Mark Lardas will discuss the history of the attack submarine, the USS Cavalla, and the destroyer escort, the USS Stewart. These vessels are part of the American Undersea Warfare Center at Seawolf Park in Galveston.

Welcome to Our 2019 President
Ronnie Richards

Ronnie Richards is the newly elected incoming new President of the League City Historical Society. He was President from 2009 to 2014 so with all the transitions and changes taking place we are truly thankful to have his expertise and guidance again.

Ronnie & wife Nancy are Founders of Butler’s Courtyard which is still in the family and run by their two daughter’s Amber Murphy and Shawna Erminger. They have 3 daughters and they all live in League City along with 7 of their 8 grandchildren. Ronnie serves as a Director on Galveston County Water Control & Improvement District 12 Board, was recently appointed by Governor Abbott to serve through 2023 on the state Manufactured Housing Board and is Vice President of the EDC in Clear Lake Shores.

Welcome New Members!
Nigel & Beth Cook      Luanne Newman
Deborah Swift
New Lifetime Member - Raymond Bartels
A Word From the President......

First I want to thank the Membership for selecting me to be the President for the next two year term. It is both an honor and a challenge as we move forward facing some very unique opportunities. As I enter this term the landscape has changed dramatically with the retirement of Catharin Lewis who served in three roles; Museum Curator, Museum Director and Schoolhouse Director. During her 25 year tenure with the Society we had her and husband Richard’s hands-on fulltime volunteer effort to pretty much take care of everything.

That being said, it’s time for us to look ahead and move forward. Your board has been participating in a program launched by the Texas Association of Museums in the greater Houston area called Finding Alternative Futures: Sustainability Through Coaching. This project explores fresh ways for history museums and history organizations to address issues of relevance and financial sustainability under the guidance of experienced coaches.

Many history organizations in Texas are struggling for survival. Although museums and other history organizations conduct important work by collecting and interpreting history, they often do so in a precarious financial position with inadequate community support. These organizations are at risk. Finding Alternative Futures is designed to help and came along just at the right time for us.

Among the requirements for inclusion in this project is that your board agreed to be open to significant change. With that in mind Coaches have worked with board members and select volunteers who are ready to do things differently if necessary in today’s environment. This program is an intensive 15-month relationship designed to assess our options for sustainability, elevate professionalism, and prepare for substantive change.

Our next gathering will be at the League City Library January 31 from 7 – 8pm where we will join others interested in history to hear about the naval vessels at Sea Wolf Park in Galveston. This gathering will serve as our monthly meeting as required in our bylaws. February 21 we will hold an evening gathering, Night at the Museum where we will bring guests to encourage to become new members and enjoy wine & cheese. Please join us.

We have a very strong Board to guide us as we move forward. If you have any thoughts you would like to share with me my email and cell phone is below. Text or emails work great.

Ronnie Richards  
ronnie@butlerscourtyard.com  
281-797-1970
Happy Retirement Catharin!!

For 25 years the League City Historical Society has been honored to have Catharin Lewis as the Director/Curator of our West Bay Common School Children’s Museum.

Catharin was one of 8 children and the daughter of a Lutheran pastor. She has a Bachelor of Science degree and was accepted into the Winedale Museum Seminar as well as Museum Science Training at Texas Assoc. of Museums and the American Assoc. of State & Local History in Nashville. She and husband Richard met in college and married in 1968. They have three children and 13 grandchildren.

In 1984 IBM moved the family to Texas. While on vacation Catharin and Richard visited a one-room schoolhouse in Stillwater, OK and fell in love with the idea of teaching children of all ages the history of the one-room school and how education was conducted at the turn of the last century. To make this dream happen they had to find a one-room school. Searching far and wide they finally located West Bay Common School #13 east of Baytown. Through much negotiation and planning, a partnership was formed with the League City Historical Society. In December 1992 the one-room school building was moved to our site at 210 North Kansas where two schools had been previously, and where an old CCISD bus barn was still on the property. Restoration work was done by society volunteers and companies and businesses donated money and supplies to help complete the project. Dedication ceremonies for West Bay Common School Children’s Museum were held on October 21, 1993. Catharin’s dream had finally come true!

She became the Curator, .....and along with husband Richard they spent most of their time toward the mission of making the community aware of our rich history in the United States and Texas and to understand how far we have come in the field of education showing the similarities and differences. Catharin would probably say she could have never accomplished this without Richard by her side. A vision to develop the school was shared by both of them. He was not only her rock through all the process of setting up the school but he is a fine craftsman, can repair nearly anything and is an expert when it comes to restoration.

Few people would be so driven, so dedicated and so focused to make this dream come true for the children of the area and the League City Historical Society. President Ronnie Richards stated, “There is no way we can ever replace Catharin. She wore so many hats as School Director, Curator, and Museum Manager. She will be sorely missed”.

(continued on next page)
Happy Retirement Catharin (continued)

So.......it is with a little sadness, but a smile, for a wish that Catharin gets the rest she so much deserves and that she and Richard get to do some traveling, and have some fun times together without having to worry about WBCS.

LCHS Board of Directors has created the position of “Director of Education” and hired one of Catharin’s teachers who has been with us for 15 years. She is very qualified, resourceful, sweet and you will learn more about her in the February newsletter. LCHS Treasurer and Board Member Katie Benoit Hake has volunteered to coordinate LCHS and WBCS issues and will be at West Bay Common School Children’s Museum every Wednesday from 10am to 2pm until we work our way through the transition and hire a Curator. Many meetings and plans have been discussed about how we will be able to carry on without Catharin and plans are developing with progress being made each day. Catharin plans to volunteer a little of her time occasionally and Richard is still in charge of maintenance. (He did not retire, thank goodness!)

Catharin says she plans to do some quilting and weaving, work on a photo collection and maybe....write a book! . May she have fun, get rested, and have wonderful peace in knowing that she fulfilled a lifelong dream and in doing this, her efforts influenced and enriched over 100,000 students lives.

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**Supplies Needed**

West Bay Common School Children’s Museum is in need of basic supplies again this year. Any help with the following items would be gratefully appreciated. You may drop donations by the school on Wednesday’s 10am to 2pm. “Thanks” ahead of time!!

- Toilet paper
- Copy Paper
- Paper towels
- Stamps
- Toilet Bowl Cleaner
- Clorox Wipes
- Mr. Green Cleaner
- Bottled Water
- Hornet Spray
- Hand Soap

President Doug McKee and Richard & Catharin Lewis at the Retirement Party in December.
November 29, 2018

Mike Peterson welcomed everyone.

Every November, the Society votes for Officers and/or Directors. Richard Lewis, Chairman of the Nominations Committee, asked for floor nominations, and there were none. Ronnie Richards, as the new President, will step out of being a Director. Doug McKee, former President, is now a Director. A vote was held and was unanimous for the slate.

Catharin Lewis reported that we had 1,315 people visit the Barn Museum in October, of whom 994 people visited during the 4-day period for the WWI exhibit. We received $1,500 in donations for that exhibit. Catharin will have 3 days of classes in December.

In January, we will meet at the Helen Hall Library instead of at the Barn Museum.

Mike introduced tonight’s speaker, Steph McDougal.

Steph’s topic was ground penetrating radar (“GPR”), often used for exploring battlefields, looking for burial sites, and searching for building foundations. Without GPR, you would have to sift through any removed dirt to see what you’ve possibly disturbed, such as an unmarked grave. The GPR equipment is on a cart with a transmitter, a receiver, and a computer. The cart is run in a pattern over the ground, much like when you mow. The GPR unit indicates if something is different under the scanned ground, any kind of disturbance in the soil underneath. The unit can transmit its images in slices for use in interpreting what’s been found. Old Bayview Cemetery in Corpus Christi, the oldest federal military cemetery in Texas, has used GPR, as has the Andersonville National Historical Site, the Confederacy prison in Georgia. GPR is commonly used by construction companies to look for utility lines, water pipes, foundations, etc. The expense of using GPR is approximately $200 to rent the unit and $5,000 to scan 2 acres of land.

Before doing any exploration of an historic area, an antiquities permit must be issued by the Texas Historical Commission. An example of a need for a permit is when Fairview Cemetery wanted to erect its fence or when the Butler Longhorn Museum was being expanded.

Meeting adjourned.

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Something to think about! A “Life Membership” means... You give LCHS super support and you never have to remember to pay dues again! $400 well spent!
History Uncorked
A Wine & Cheese
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
LEAGUE CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP DRIVE
• Bring a guest, spouse, friend or neighbor
• Come meet the new Director of Education

February 21, 2019
4pm-8pm
League City Historical Society
210 North Kansas
League City, Texas
Another reminder: Don’t miss the History Club Programs at Helen Hall Library the last Thursday of each month - 7pm to 8pm in the Library Theater at Helen Hall Library.

**The first program is Thursday, January 31, 7pm. Program: Warships at Seawolf Park.**

Other scheduled programs are as follows:
Thursday, March 28 – Texas Dance Hall Preservation – Steph McDougal

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**Ghirardi House Repairs & Renovation Project**

An Italian farmhouse built in the last century was donated by the Ghirardi Family and moved to Heritage Park to become part of the Butler Longhorn Museum complex. A FY 2019 project will make repairs to the house to keep it from deteriorating any further and will renovate the structure as follows:

- Electrical Service, Interior and security lighting
- HVAC
- Security system and fire alarm/fire control
- New porch and porch repairs
- Handicapped ramps
- Roof repairs and new shingles
- Siding repairs
- Sheetrock replacement inside
- Paint inside and outside

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**Refrigerator Needed!**

The museum is in need of a refrigerator to replace the one that has served us so well for the last 25 years. If you have a used refrigerator that falls into the 18 cu ft. or larger category, we would greatly appreciate contacting us. Moving will be provided. Thank you for your donation.

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**Yard Sale – Saturday, April 16!**

As you are cleaning out closets and garages this new year be sure and save unwanted items for our yard sale. More details will be forthcoming next month. Email Chairman Darryl Krogman if you have questions. darryldrogman@yahoo.com
Members...........It is Time to Pay Dues!
If You Are Not A Member, We Are Hoping You Will Join!!

League City Historical Society

Thank you for being a member. It is time to renew membership for 2019. The various types of memberships with the associated dues are listed below. To renew your membership or become a new member, select the membership level that is best for you, complete the form and mail to: LCHS, PO Box 1642, League City Texas 77573

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Please update your membership information here:

Name ______________________________________________________________
(For family membership, please include names of family members)

Address: ____________________________________________________________

City: _____________________________ State: ___________ Zip: ___________

Phone: __________________________ Cell: _____________________________

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 postage.

Please Note: Membership is for one year and covers you until January 2020.