May 25th Speaker

The History of Broom Making
In League City: From the Witches On
By Richard Lewis

Please join the general membership meeting for our May meeting, Thursday, May 25th at the Barn Museum. The doors open at 6:45 so we can socialize, with the meeting starting at 7 pm. This month our speaker will be our very own Richard Lewis, Director, League City Historical Society Board of Directors, presenting The History of Broom Making In League City: From The Witches’ Broom On. Richard’s presentation will be a hands-on experience on the history of broom making in our local city and the United States. See and touch brooms and mops actually made in League City over the years as well as made in America from the pioneer days until today. The meeting is sure to be an interesting and informative event.
Richard Lewis welcomed everyone to the meeting. We were reminded that Friday, July 14th, is our annual Living History Dinner at Walding Station. George Washington will be our speaker. As always, we need items donated for the silent auction.

Our speaker was Steph McDougal, member, preservationist, and Chair of the City’s Historic District Commission. Steph discussed the terms “significance,” “architectural style,” “character-defining features,” and “integrity.” She spoke about looking for character-defining features that help to read a house, such as its siding, windows, roof, and porch. Steph began her Power Point presentation with the topic of porches. Until the 1880’s, people thought illness came from the night air, the miasma, so houses were built with fewer and smaller windows. After the 1880’s, when we knew about bacteria, etc., people began adding porches to their houses so they could sit out and enjoy some fresh air.

A structure doesn’t necessarily have to have historical significance; it can have “significance” because it is a good example of its style or because it’s one of the few remaining of that style. Steph showed slides of beautiful homes that maintain their architectural style and some not-so-beautiful homes, ones that had been badly altered. Houses lose their integrity if they no longer have the character-defining features.

In order to maintain your historic structure, Steph recommends: 1) identify the important architectural details of your home; 2) preserve those details through regular maintenance; 3) repair your home when needed--don’t wait until the damage is too far gone; 4) replace only when absolutely necessary and then use like material--siding is a big issue in this respect; or better yet 5) reconstruct a damaged or missing piece, using like material and in keeping with the structure’s style.

League City has hired a consultant to conduct a survey of all structures within the Historic District. Having this information will allow us to see where this area actually lies. The City wants your photographs and histories of structures within the Historic District. Contact the City’s Planning Department or Steph McDougal with this material so it can be included in the City’s history (Steph.Mcdougal@Mcdoux.com or 281.755.2144). She encourages a closer relationship between the Historical Society, the Historical District Commission, and the citizens living and working within the Historic District.

Interesting trivia: Currently, something has to be 50 years old to be considered historical. “Victorian” is indicative of the time period, and not a style name.

Meeting adjourned.
We share delight each month as visitors appear at our door with stories of how they visited as a child many years ago. They mention it was the best field trip ever and now want to bring children they are babysitting, children of their own or their students. Some did not remember the location and were thrilled when they finally discovered it. Of course, many things have changed in twenty four years and they are excited to tour the museum once again. We had 120 walk-in visitors in April and close to 400 total visitors. We held nine schoolhouse sessions where groups came from Kingwood, Galveston, Humble, Willis, Friendswood and League City.

We want to thank Ralph Shipp from North Carolina for his recent check donation to help with repairing the Icehouse and the new exhibit materials for it. He continues to share in the work here at the museum with special funding.

Work continues in the back office digitizing the collection. We are working on files and notebooks in the collection. I sometimes have three computers and scanners going at the same time to get through a certain file. Nothing new was added to our collection last month so that helps in the “catch-up” process.

We are planning a **Work Day for June 3rd**. We hope to get windows washed, desks cleaned and polished, floors cleaned and repairs made to the Ice House. Some jobs will take less time than others, so if you can come and help with any of these jobs, please let me know. We plan to start early about 8:30 and work until noon if we have enough help.

Our **Annual Teddy Bear Parade is set for July 4th**. If you would like to volunteer for about two hours beginning at 9:30am, we could use your help registering children, pinning numbers on them and help getting them in line. We can also use help monitoring the museum while others are working the registration. Let me know if you can help.
Did you know that the nineteenth century house which is now Nana’s Attic in Founders’ Square, League City, once sat on the northeast corner of Dickinson Avenue and 30th Street in Dickinson TX? The home that now stands on the property, 2909 Dickinson Avenue, is owned by Joan Milutin, the Arolfo’s granddaughter-in-law. Her husband, John Milutin Jr., was the son of Katie Arolfo (1896-1992) and John Milutin. Katie was the oldest child of the Arolfo family and the only one born in Italy. This is the only existing Arolfo property the family owned, which was once part of the four blocks in the Nicholstone subdivision. Giuseppe and Ursula Arolfo purchased the acreage in 1897 for their celery farm. It was bounded by Dickinson Avenue on the west, 28th Street on the north, Kansas Street on the east and 30th Street on the south.

Members of the Arolfo family continuously lived in the Dickinson in the home from 1897 to 1995. Their second child and first son, Lawrence “Chino” Arolfo (1898-1981), was the first child born in America. He married Caterina Daro in 1918 on Mike Galifone’s farm. Their son, Johnnie Louis Arolfo, became League City’s first mayor in 1962. After his mother’s death in 1912, Lawrence, age 14, worked on the Kobayashi rice farms in Webster for 50 cents a week and lived in their barn.

Antoinette Arolfo (1900-1961), their second daughter, never married. She passed away at age 61 from tuberculosis in San Antonio State Hospital.

Dominick Arolfo (1901-1968), the second son, joined the Navy at age 16, during World War I, instead of being put into an orphanage after his parents’ deaths. The 1920 US Census lists him aboard the USS Baltimore (C-3) a heavy cruiser at Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Vallejo CA. Mare Island was the first US Navy base established on the Pacific Ocean.

The third and youngest daughter, Theresa Beatrice Arolfo (1904-1973) married John Di Iorio in 1932.
Photos clockwise: Lawrence "Chino" Arolfo and Caterina Daro wedding photo taken February 3, 1918 on Mike Galifone farm  Photo from Ancestry.com;  Katie Arolfo's husband's Draft Registration from Ancestry.com;  This is where Nana's Attic stood for 98 years, 1897-1995, 2909 Dickinson Avenue, Dickinson TX  Photo by Joyce Zongrone;  Dominick Arolfo Photo from Ancestry.com

**Mea Culpa**  In the April Newsletter on page 5, near the end of the first paragraph, it should read:  *They moved into the small frame house on the property that would become Nana’s Attic almost a hundred years later in 1995.*

I inadvertently changed the date of 1995 to 1895. The error was totally mine and not the author’s. One thing I have learned for sure being newsletter editor is this: I’m not perfect!! Please if anyone sees any other errors, feel free to point them out to me. Thanks, Evelyn!
The League City Historical Society proudly presents nationally renowned actor Mark Collins as General George Washington. This year’s Living History Dinner, and largest fundraiser for the Society, will be on Friday, July 14th, 2017 from 6 to 9 PM. The evening will once again take place at the amazing Walding Station and be catered by our friends from Ludwig’s Catering. There will be a silent auction with many tempting items but we are still accepting donations.

Mr. Collins is currently the pastor at First Baptist Church in Yorktown, Texas. He has appeared in films such as "National Treasure 2" and the History Channels mini series "The Revolution". He has also portrayed our first president at many National Parks and museums throughout the US.

Want to get the full experience? Check out the following books: "Washington: A Life" by Ron Chernow, His Excellency: George Washington by Joseph J. Ellis, or "1776" by David McCullough. We might also suggest the following movie "The Crossing" (2000), or, if you like musicals, "1776" (1972).

Limited seating. Tickets available in June.
2017 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 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.

Note: If you have paid your dues in October 2016 or later, you are current for the year 2017.

☐ Student/Active Military $20
☐ Senior (60 and over) $25
☐ Senior Couple $35
☐ Single individual $35
☐ Family $50
☐ Supporting Member $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: ______________________________________________________________________________

☐ 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.