September 2014  Newsletter  Kathie Nenninger Editor knenninger@verizon.net

From Leather to Lace
A Study of American Aprons

September 25th Meeting
This month we are lucky to have Susan Webb from Birmingham, Alabama as our speaker. In her research for this brand new presentation on aprons, she said “I am starting to consider myself an “Apronologist”.

She is called “Americas Traveling Schoolmarm” due to her nationwide travels on the subject of early American education. With 20 years as a classroom teacher, her background in theater, and over a decade of American educational research, she has developed programs that have transported her to universities, conferences, historical societies, libraries and museums across the United States.

She has asked the audience to bring an apron that is of special interest to you because she would love to include you in her discussion.

The topic this month couldn’t be more perfect and will serve as a kick-off of sorts for a special new Museum exhibit entitled “Apron’s and the War” which is a fascinating peek into the war years with many new artifacts and aprons of that same WWII time period. Catharin Lewis, our Curator, has worked for months on this exhibit that includes many WWII artifacts from League City soldiers that have never been seen before. It all starts at 6:45 Thursday September 25th.

Calendar

September 25  Susan Webb
From Leather to Lace: A Study of American Aprons

October 9  Living History Dinner with Jean Lafitte

October 30  Steph McDougal
The Lighthouses of Texas

November 20  DeeAnn and Mike Peterson
The Capt. Meyer House Move & Restoration

There will be no meeting in December

from the President...
Ronnie Richards

First and foremost I want to remind everyone about the upcoming Living History Dinner October 9th at Butler’s Courtyard. We need silent auction items and sponsors to push this event over the top. If you haven’t secured your tickets yet please be sure to do so. Social starts at 6:30 pm with dinner and program at 7 pm. Our historic figure this year will be Jean Lafitte.

- For those wanting to pay by Credit Card, please click on the Dinner Reservations link below, select your ticket options and then the ORDER NOW button.

- For those wanting to pay by Check, click on the same Dinner Reservations link below but select the SHOW OTHER PAYMENT OPTIONS, not the ORDER NOW button.

Dinner Reservations

If you have any questions please feel free to call Catharin at the Museum 281-554-2994.

We need silent auction items for this event. If nothing comes to mind consider buying a gift card. That makes it simple for you. All donations can be delivered to the Museum, 210 N Kansas at 2nd St, League City.

The Galveston Historical Foundations is hosting a conference on coastal resilience on October 8-10 at Ashton Villa (2328 Broadway in Galveston.) They have asked us to get the word out. You can go to www.galvestonhistory.org/resilience2014 for more info. The site lists a registration price, but if anyone from the board of League City Historical Society would like to attend Matthew Pelz (matthew.pelz@galvestonhistory.org) will get you registered for a discounted registration fee.
August 28, 2014 Meeting

Ronnie Richards welcomed everyone. Richard Lewis introduced our speaker, Herman Wright. The topic was the Rosenwald Schools, started by philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, the President of Sears & Roebuck. Rosenwald served on the Board of Tuskegee University and wanted to do something to help Southern black school children. Five thousand Rosenwald Schools were opened in the 1920’s, built to Rosenwald’s specifications, making all the buildings somewhat similar in design. Mr. Wright’s father attended a Rosenwald School as a child and credited his school and teachers with making him a man. The Rosenwald Schools began to disappear when integration began. Of the 500 Rosenwald Schools built in Texas, 50 are still standing.

Mr. Wright also spoke about his ranch located near Jasper, Texas. Jasper County had more Rosenwald Schools than any other county in Texas. Wright is currently restoring a Rosenwald School, and he travels all over to speak about the Rosenwald Schools. For more information and a guided tour of Rosenwald Schools, go to www.thelongblackline.org.

This year’s Living History Dinner will be held October 9th at Butler’s Courtyard, and will feature Jean Lafitte, the notorious pirate who lived in Galveston. The dinner is expected to sell out, so get your tickets soon. If you have items you wish to donate for the silent auction, please take them to Catharin Lewis at the museum sometime this month. Donations will be acknowledged in the event program.

Catharin gave her report, saying that the museum was slow last month. The Treasurer’s Report was given.

The meeting was adjourned.

LIVING HISTORY DINNER AUCTION ITEMS are still needed. These donations may be brought to the museum. Deadline for drop off is October 3rd, 2014. Thank you in advance for your support. All donations help support the projects of the League City Historical Society. These projects include the West Bay Common School Children’s Museum, The Live Oak Tree Registry and the Landmark Medallion project. Tickets for the October 9th dinner at Butler’s Courtyard are available at the museum, Butler’s Courtyard and online www.leaguecityhistory.org

We want to welcome Julie Sinchack as our newest volunteer and her family as new members of the Society. She comes with enthusiasm, interest in history and many other wonderful talents. If you are also interested in volunteering, pick your day and come. Volunteers usually serve three hours a week, mornings or afternoons. Their jobs vary daily from copying materials, helping with the gift shop, changing exhibits, and sweeping to just being there to help answer the phone. Each year we do need a new staff of volunteers.

Aprons and the War Exhibit are now open. Similar to the stories your grandmother once told, the apron was to protect the dress underneath. Because she only had a few, it was easier to wash aprons than dresses and they used less material. Even though aprons have been around since Medieval and Renaissance times, aprons were popular during war times as well. We have several of our member’s aprons on exhibit as well as aprons from the museum collection. Art Hewitt lived in League City for many years and was a POW in WWII. His daughter has graciously shared many of his personal things of interest for this temporary exhibit. Plan now to stop by the museum with your family and friends and see all the new changes.

We want to thank Katie Hake for her donation of a cloth tape measure. We also want to thank Sandra Malmgren for her recent donation of a 1940’s navy dress and jacket, a 1940’s ivory jacket, a photo print, a 1949 child’s dress, and a 1949 child’s shirt and blouse set. These items are now on exhibit for everyone to enjoy. All the items are a nice addition to our museum collection and are greatly appreciated.

There is still time to register field trips for the fall or spring schedules. Let your friends know that they have to call early for reservations to get the choice dates. Our November calendar is almost full, but there are still openings in October or December.

Our STORIES IN THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE program is set for October 31st, Halloween. We are offering two sessions for children ages 3 – 5 years (accompanied by an adult). The one hour program will be held at 9:30am and again at 11:30am. The program includes the story Stellaluna by Janell Cannon, bat facts, a fun bat craft and a costume march to music with our player piano. Groups of 5 or more children must register in advance by October 24th to guarantee a space. Cost is $4 per child. You can register by calling the museum 281-554-2994 or on line at www.oneroomschoolhouse.org.
Did you know that …?

By Joyce Zongrone

Did you know that Galveston’s first European settlers were pirates, led by none other than the notorious privateer and corsair, Jean Laffite? Laffite arrived in Galveston after a resounding victory at the Battle of New Orleans, where he fought alongside General Andrew Jackson in 1815. Laffite offered his weapons helping to turn the tide, supplying 2000 badly needed rifle flints to Jackson whose rifle flints were worn down from the Creek Indians War of 1814. Along with those flint rifles came Laffite’s men, who were skilled gunners trained to fire with deadly accuracy even on the rolling waters of the high seas. Jean and his brother Pierre became part of Jackson’s staff, and their brother, Dominique You, commanded a battery of cannons hoisted from the buccaneers’ ships.

The hero of the Battle of New Orleans usurped control of Galveston in April 1817 from French pirate Louis Aury. Aury’s reign as resident commissioner lasted only 8 months from the time Jose Manuel de Herrera, a priest and Mexican rebel envoy, proclaimed Galveston a part of the Mexican republic in September 1816.

The pirate colony was the first permanent settlement in Galveston and home to more than 1000 residents. By 1821, it was the second largest city in Texas and also the center of illegal commerce and slave trading on the Gulf Coast.

Laffite built his personal residence on what is now Harborside Dr (formerly Water St) between 14th and 15th Streets. His original home site was the first substantial home ever built in Galveston. It was painted red, called Maison Rouge, and was said to have been luxuriously furnished with booty from captured ships. Surrounded by a ditch, it was outfitted with four canons; one was placed on the upper floor for firing on ships in the harbor, making the home a veritable fortress. Laffite burned it and the entire encampment when he left in 1820. Fifty years later, in 1870, sea captain F.W. Hendricks built a home on this site, reportedly on top of the old cellar and foundations of Laffite’s mansion. This structure, known locally as Hendricks Castle or The House of Twelve Gables, was demolished in the 1950s, but the concrete arches and the staircase, still visible today, could date back to the original 1817 structure.

Laffite, along with Jim Bowie, may well have been one of history’s first money launderers. During 1817, he swapped contraband goods from looted Spanish galleons for furs he obtained from traders from the interior of Texas. The legal furs were later sold in Jamaica, Martinique and other American ports.

James Bowie, of Alamo fame, slave-traded with Laffite. The Gulf Coast of early Texas was the largest slave market in the new world. In 1818, Bowie and his brother Rezin partnered with Laffite in illegally importing slaves by smuggling them from Texas, which was not part of the United States. The U.S. prohibited international slave trade in 1808, but internal slave-trading continued and the slave population would eventually peak at four million before abolition. The Bowies bought slaves from Laffite in lots of 40 at a time, paid one silver dollar per pound, brought them to Louisiana and informed Customs Inspectors of the whereabouts of those slaves. Customs then sold the slaves at auction for $500, giving the Bowies a $250 informant fee. Since the Bowies only paid Laffite $150 per slave, they initially made $100 on each slave. They then resold them, away from the coastal area, for $1000, making $1100 on a $150 investment. Laffite and the Bowies were probably America’s first money launderers, cleverly transforming the proceeds of their crimes into legitimate money and assets.

---

You are invited…

The League City Historical Society Cordially invites you to our Living History Dinner at Butler’s Courtyard 123 Michigan Avenue, League City Thursday October 2, 2014 6:30 pm Cocktails & Social 7:30 pm Dinner

Meet Jean Laffite Famous Reveille

Portrayed by Jim Nonus Entertainment & Silent Auction $35 per person Limited Tickets on sale at Butler’s Courtyard and at the Cisueva Schumann Museum 140 North Kansas Ave, League City Proceeds benefit the programs of the League City Historical Society
A Special Welcome to Our New Members

Melissa Aguillar
Abdul Al-Sahli
Julie, Don and Sam Sinchak

League City Historic District
Commission Report

LCHS Rep. to the LCHDC
...Fay Dudney
August 6, 2014

A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install
two windows on a new garage door at 810 Coryell Street
was conditionally approved by Commission members.
In order to conform to the zoning ordinance, Section
125-81-H.1a, the applicant is required to select a design
of one of two existing windows for the new garage,
which he has agreed to do.
No meeting has been scheduled for September.

At the Helen Hall Library...

Computer classes - Pre-registration and preliminary skill
assessment required. Registration must be within 7 days
of class date. Please call 281-554-1101.

File Management: Working with Files and Folders
September 24, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM @ Helen Hall
Library - Computer Lab

Basic Keyboarding and Typing Skills
October 1, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM @ Helen Hall Library -
Computer Lab

Basic Internet Skills
October 8, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM @ Helen Hall Library -
Computer Lab

Local Authors: Harold C. Raley  Author of Louisiana
Rogue  October 2, 10:15 AM-11:15 AM @ Helen Hall
Library - Susan Mathews Theater

Marketing and Publishing Group
Self-Publishing Tips & Tricks
October 2, 11:45 AM - 1:00 PM @ Helen Hall Library -
Board Room

Book Sale Preview for Members of the Friends of the
Library
October 9, 5:30 PM - 9:30 PM @ Helen Hall Library -
Susan Mathews Theater

Friends of the Library Book Sale!
October 10, 10:00 AM - 5:30 PM and October 11,
10:00AM - 2:00PM @ Helen Hall Library - Susan
Mathews Theater

League City Police Department/DEA
Drug Take Back Event
September 27, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM @ the
League City Civic Center

Do you have expired or unwanted prescription
medications? The League City Police Department is
hosting a DEA take-back event Saturday, September 27
from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. We will be located in the parking lot
between City Hall and the Civic Center at 400 W Walker.
It’s as simple as driving thru and dropping them off and
it’s ANONYMOUS. Keep prescriptions drugs out of the
wrong hands and make a difference by disposing of
your unwanted or expired medications. All medications
gathered will be destroyed off site.

OFFICERS & BOARD

Ronnie Richards  President
Evelyn Garland  Vice-President
Diana Dornak  Treasurer
Susan Pierce  Secretary
Phyllis White  Corresponding Secretary
Jeff Hansen  Director
Helen Hodges  Director
Richard Lewis  Director
Doug McKee  Director
Doris Teets  Director
Joyce Zongrone  Director
Joanna Sharp Dawson  Immediate Past President
Catharin Lewis  Museum Director

GJHF’s
Genteel Junque Returns October 17 & 18

An array of antiques, furniture and home accessories
will be available for sale at Galveston Historical
Foundation’s annual sale of donated items. Held at the
Architectural Salvage Warehouse, 2228 Broadway inside
GJHF’s 1940 Sears Building, the sale will emphasize high-
quality antiques, furniture and art in good condition. A
preview evening with light refreshments will be held on
Friday, October 17th from 5 – 7 p.m. with complimentary
admission to GJHF members beginning at 5 p.m. The
general public can get a head start on the sale beginning
at 6 p.m. for $15. Admission is free on Saturday, October
18 and will be open from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Proceeds from
the sales of items benefit Galveston Historical
Foundation. www.galvestonhistory.org
GREAT NEWS!

After years in the making, the book about descendents from Cercenasco, Italy is now available in English.

Come to the next meeting to see it and learn more.