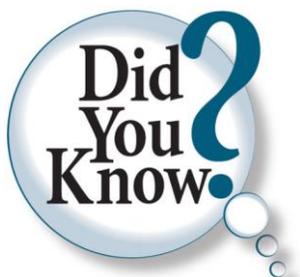


June/July 2023 Newsletter



Look on page four for a fascinating question about an artifact. See if you know the answer.

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Since we don't do a Newsletter in July, we now have a combined Newsletter this year. June was a busy month with many exciting activities for the League City Historical Society. We celebrated several events throughout the month. There were additional One Room Schoolhouse visits, two "Music at the Museum" concerts along with the 2nd annual White Linen Night. In preparation for all our additional guests throughout the month, changes were made to the exhibits in the Barn Museum, additional signs were made for the historic homes, repairs to the One Room Schoolhouse bridge and several trees trimmed to ensure we were ready. Special thanks to all the members that helped prepare. It has been very

(Continued next page)

rewarding to watch all the different parties come together to participate, support, and enjoy the beautiful historic district of League City. What a great way to kick off the summer.

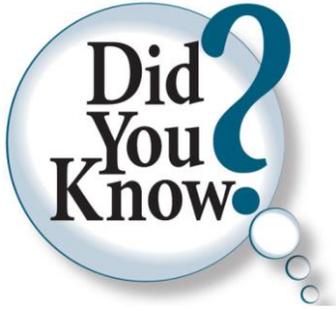
Last month's newsletter mentioned the select group of LCHS leaders/teachers that were leaving for Lancaster, Pennsylvania to attend the COUNTRY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA ANNUAL CONFERENCE. They have all returned safely and are ready to share the experience with us all. It will be important to know how this experience will help our Nationally Recognized schoolhouse program for the LCHS.

CSAA pictures below and next page....



CSAA Annual Conference pictures (Continued)





Do you know what this is?



Answer:

it is called a "soap saver". They would put bars of soap in it when they got too small to use. Then you can dip it in any pan or bucket of water, swish it around to make soapy water. This is how practical were they were 100 years ago.

We wanted to make sure you knew of an exciting event coming to Galveston, TX on Saturday, July 15th at 1:00 pm. There will be a fundraiser with afternoon tea and sweets supporting the restoration project for the JC League-Kempner Home. It will be held at the Broadway Church of Christ (1628 Broadway St.). The Texas Victorian Lady, and all her beautiful models will present the history of the Victorian Era. They will display several spectacular dresses from her collection. You will have the opportunity to understand the importance of these historically stunning outfits from the late 1800s/early 1900s. Please plan on joining this wonderful event while helping such an important cause.



IT'S THE EVENT OF THE SEASON

The League-Kempner House
Presents:
A genteel afternoon of tea and sweets with a Victorian Fashion Show
featuring
J'Neen Henderson and Kim Sessler of *The Victorian Lady*.

J'Neen and Kim will recreate the romantic ambience of a bygone era
with an array of fashions from 1860 to 1912.
They will illustrate the customs and proprieties observed by the
Victorian Lady and demonstrate the "language" of the fan.

Saturday, July 15th
Doors open at 1:00 pm
Show begins at 1:30 pm

Broadway Church of Christ
1628 Broadway St., Galveston, TX 77550

Tickets are \$45 and can be purchased online at:
leaguekempnerhouse.org

For those who are interested, The League-Kempner House
will be open afterwards for self-guided tours.

Your attendance will help restore
The League-Kempner House - a 501(c)(3) nonprofit

LeagueKempnerHouse.org

Over the last few months, the LCHS has worked with one of our SchoolMARMs's and board member (Linda Michael) on a very special project. Linda and her family donated this 67-year-old table that illustrates all the Texas counties. Linda's father, R.E. "Bob" Lewis, was a League City native that made the table by hand in late 1956. It was built using 385 separate pieces, and 69 different kinds of wood, are native to Texas. It is a one-of-a-kind table that is truly a piece of art. Once the restoration was complete, the table was delivered to Mark Smith (Principal) and Melissa Rodriguez (Asst. Principal) of Ferguson Elementary School. With Linda being a retired CCISD teacher, who at one time worked at Ferguson Elementary, this was a wonderful gift. Now the children can use the table in the library as they learn more about the Texas counties.



L to R - Mike Peterson (LCHS), Mark Smith (Principal), Melissa Rodriguez (Asst. Principal), Deeann Peterson (LCHS)



R.E. "Bob" Lewis



2nd White Linen Night



HISTORY OF WHITE LINEN NIGHT

White Linen Night originated from a centuries-old New Orleans tradition. People in New Orleans decided that wearing all white was a great way to lessen the effects of the sun and the stifling heat while outdoors.

White linen originated in Ireland. As thousands of Irish immigrants moved into cities linen also made its way to America. People have been wearing it since the 19th and 20th centuries. Traditionally people were outside laboring and riding their horses so the white helped reflect the sun. After Queen Victoria it was also a symbol of the aristocracy. During the 21st century White Linen Nights and the traditions behind the warm weather wear took off. People would notice that spring was shifting into summer when the wearing of white linen appeared.

The first White Linen Night was in New Orleans in 1994. It helped bring attention to the local culture and arts by displaying them in the urban warehouses used for the 1984 World's Fair.



Thank you to LCFA and all our LCHS volunteers!

League City Historical Society President Michael Peterson, Treasurer Katie Benoit, Secretary Amber Murphy along with members of League City Patrons of the Parks & Arts Foundation, and Keep League City Beautiful presented Ashley Jackson with a plaque of appreciation at the last June City Council Meeting. Ashley, the Community & Special Events Coordinator for the City of League City, did amazing work coordinating the 2nd White Linen Night Art Fest and did it all with enthusiasm and a smile on her face - a true gem in our community!



Mark your calendars for future 2023 events...

- * **Music at the Museum** - July 28th, August 25th, 7PM to 10 PM
- * **Yard Sale** - September 16th, 8AM to 2PM (start collecting things NOW!)
- * **National Night Out** - October 3rd, 6PM to 8PM
- * **Punkin' Parade** - October 14th, 10AM to 11AM
- * **Murder & Mayhem/ Ghost WALKabout** - September & October 2023, dates and times TBD.
- * **Christmas in Old League City** - December 8th & 9th, 10AM to 3PM

Music at the Museum



May 26th “Music at the Museum” was another special evening for everyone that attended. With the weather getting hot, the dedicated/committed audience (~300 people) embraced the heat and brought their lawn chairs to sit back and listen to all the new/talent musicians joining this monthly event. Tucker and Rachel continue to attract new artists that are so impressive for the *League City Folk Association*, the *League City Historical Society*, and the local community. Special thanks to all the musicians that shared their music:



MADDY GRACE & COLTON JAMES
SHANNON ANDERSON
CARL BRAINERD
DON MEYER
MIKE KISER
CHRIS J HARDY- SPOTLIGHT ARTIST
DAN YOUNG
SHALANE COLSTON
TAMMY CARROLL
GYPSY VIN ROSE
MARK WINTERS
KIM SOLEM & JOHN HULL
SAUERFRY
ONE FRY SHORT
KYLE LOWRY
LEAH SMITH SCHNEIDER
TUCKER HART

As with our tradition, the evening kicked off with a short history lesson as well as providing updates for up-and-coming events. League City's history is so rich due to the early families that came south to start a new life filled with opportunities. Before the music started, we discussed the importance of John Robert Derrick and his family. They arrived in 1839 and were the first settlers in the Clear Creek community. They built their log cabin in 1842 where Clear Creek empties into Clear Lake. Then came George Washington Butler in 1854 followed by J.C. League in 1890. In 1903 the Japanese families arrived and began cultivating rice followed by the Italian families in 1923 to start raising vegetables. League City continues to intrigue all of us based on the local history. Special thanks to all the research the LCHS Historians continue to provide so we all know more of our past. So fascinating.



The Postman Cometh

The Story of the League City Post Office and its U.S. Post Office Partner

By Joyce Zongrone

Few historical events in League City have been as daunting as the chronicling of its post office's past, which elicited a local feud and a flurry of letters for four years, from 1897 to 1901, between local Democrats, Republicans and even Congressmen.

In 1858, 120 acres on Clear Creek and the railroad were sold to Galveston businessmen and became the Clear Creek Development Company. The land was used to form a brickyard under the name of Holmes and Waterman, located in the area of what is now Fairview Cemetery, which was formed after the 1900 Storm.

The first post office was located in a box car near the Galveston, Houston, and Henderson Railroad in 1859. The mail arrived by train. Early pictures show a frame building on the corner of East Galveston Road and Perkins Avenue, where it was next to Johnson Ingle, formerly McKibben's, dry goods store, Yolland's meat market and Brown's shoe repair shop.

In the 1920s, the post office was located in the 500 block of Main Street across the street from the Masonic Building, in the area where Founders' Square is today. In the 1940s and 50s, the post office was located in a masonry building at 218 Clear Creek Avenue, where Ecclesia Church is today. Our museum post office display is from this building. Dr. Leander Dallas's historic home, built in 1911 at 201 East Wilkins St. and Clear Creek Avenue, sits behind this site. The Clear Creek Avenue site was used before the present building at 240 West Galveston Street was dedicated in 1989.

In October 1873, at age 28, George Washington Butler purchased 34 acres on the G.H. and H. Railroad for his homestead. This was known as the Butler Ranch and Cattle Station, and was located on the south side of Clear Creek. It quickly became a passenger and mail pick-up and drop-off point on the railroad. Shortly thereafter, Butler became the first unofficial postmaster and a man named Boone was his assistant. Butler later again became the Postmaster from 1886 to 1897.

From 1874 through 1960 there were 18 postmasters and post mistresses. The first female postmistress was 43-year-old Mrs. Angie L. Finger, 1917 to 1922. Over the

next 43 years, there were seven female postmistresses, one of which was Helen Hall (Postmistress 1935-43), wife of banker Walter Hall. She also was a 1971 charter member of the Helen Hall Library Board, named in honor of her service.

By 1896, the local post office had become the focal point of a feud, as the residents of Clear Creek and the new League City, established in 1893, competed for the town's name. For the next six years, depending upon which party held the political upper hand, the local post office building, with Butler at the helm, moved back and forth across the railroad tracks.

Thus begins, the revolving door of postal names, as follows:

Clear Creek Post Office, February 19, 1874

Discontinued, September 4, 1874

Reestablished, December 19, 1875

Discontinued, November 1, 1876

Reestablished, February 25, 1880

League City Post Office, April 8, 1896. (J.C League created League City in 1893)

Clear Creek Post Office, July 2, 1897

League City Post Office, June 13, 1902 to date

Official Dedication of the United States Post Office Building, 218 Clear Creek Avenue, March 4, 1967

Dedication of current post office, 240 West Galveston, March 16, 1989

Congressmen Robert Bradley Hawley (1897-1901) and George Farmer Burgess (1901-1917) got involved in the debate by writing letters over the period of four years, 1897-1901, to the Postmaster Generals, urging them to change the post office name permanently to League City. The "League City" advocates eventually won the fight. Butler's Ranch, the community of Clear Creek on the west side of the railroad, and J. C. League's new town, merged to become League City.

More than 80 years before League City's fledgling post office was born, the colonists rebelled against Britain's Royal Mail and the Post Office Department and the forerunner of the United States Postal Service (USPS) was created. The Second Continental Congress declared that a Postmaster General be appointed for the United Colonies, "who shall hold his office at Philadelphia and shall be allowed a salary of \$1000 dollars

a year,” \$39,497 in today’s dollars. This was the birth of the Post Office Department, the predecessor of the United States Postal Service and the second oldest federal agency of the United States of America. The history of the post office began alongside the history of the United States.

From its beginnings, the post office used different methods of delivery: horseback, stagecoach, railroads, steam ships and of course, the Pony Express.

In the 1700s, the earliest postal carriers in America were post riders, riding along a system of post roads the colonial government created connecting small post offices where people would wait in long lines to collect their mail. By 1789, 75 post offices, and 2,400 miles of post roads served a population of almost 4 million.

By the late 1700s, stagecoaches began replacing post riders, linking Eastern communities with the growing frontier. In the 1850s, the Gold Rush created Westward migration and mail travelled along the new overland routes to California.

From the 1830s to 1978, the United States Railway Post Office, RPO, was a railroad car dedicated to sorting the mail en-route, in order to speed delivery. The RPO was staffed by highly trained Railway Mail Service postal clerks, and was off-limits to the passengers on the train.

In 1848, the U.S. Mail Steamship Company was formed to carry the mail from New York City, with stops in New Orleans and Havana, to the Isthmus of Panama, for delivery to California. The journey took about three weeks.

On April 3, 1860, the Pony Express debuted. Horse and rider relay teams simultaneously left St. Joseph, Missouri, and Sacramento, California. Ten days later, the westbound team and mail packet completed the approximately 1,800-mile journey. They arrived in Sacramento, beating the east bound riders, and set a new standard for speedy mail delivery. Although ultimately short-lived and unprofitable, ceasing in October 1861, with the completion of the transcontinental telegraph line, the Pony Express captivated America’s imagination and helped win federal aid for a more economical overland postal system. It also contributed to the economy of the towns on its route and served the mail-service needs of the American West in the days before the telegraph (1861) or an efficient transcontinental railroad (1869). Today the post office processes seven hundred million pieces of mail daily. Mail travels from mailboxes to the closest post office and is trucked to the local Delivery Distribution Center, where it is sorted. Local mail goes back on

trucks to local post offices. All other mail is driven to the closest airport. There it is flown on the first available aircraft going to its destination city. All US Mail is flown on commercial aircraft, including FEDEX and UPS. Mail flown out of the country is taken by contractors in that country to its destination.

The unofficial post office motto has always been, "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds", except in Texas during a hurricane!



The End... Whew....