



League City Historical Society League City, Texas



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August 2020

LCHS Newsletter

Diana Dornak, Editor



LCHS Members Only

It has been a quiet year so far – no work shops, no Teddy Bear Parade, no Living History Dinner, no Yard Sale, no Fundraisers...

But this changes NOW!

The Yard Sale Committee has combed through the amazing treasures donated to the LCHS and hand-picked items to offer for our

“Members Only” Fundraiser!

An email will be sent to all current members featuring select items. Each will be pictured with dimensions, condition, and other details as well as a purchase amount. The first Member to email back to leaguacitytxhistory@gmail.com with “SOLD” will be the new owner of the item and a proud supporter of LCHS! Payment can be cash, check, or paypal (charge). Item can be contactless pickup at the museum or delivered to a limited area. Any item that remains unsold for (1) week will be offered to the general public on Facebook Market Place.

**NOT A MEMBER?!! Join online at
www.leaguacityhistory.org**



From The President

I hope this finds everyone well and staying out of this heat as much as possible. In late May or early June my wife Nancy and I both had COVID-19 like symptoms (dry cough, low grade temperature, fatigue and headache) but fortunately they were not very severe. She was just tested and found positive for the antibodies meaning it was likely she had the virus. I’m getting tested next week to confirm that’s what I had. Hopefully we are now protected for a while.

Recently I attended a City Council meeting where the Council approved a contract through September 2021 with the Butler Longhorn Museum allowing the Museum to open and operate the Ghirardi House. The restoration of the home is complete except painting the exterior. The Museum will develop exhibits focused on the Italian Immigrants that came to this area in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s.

These twelve Italian families are a rich part of League City’s history. Special thanks to Raymond Bartels, a lifetime member of the Historical Society and Italian family descendant, for his work in organizing support for the Museum.

(continued on next page)

(From The President – continued)

The Downtown Revitalization project is proceeding. Park Street is completed and work is well underway to complete League Park by November. If you haven't seen the progress you should drive by. The new clay brick paver sidewalks really look great. Among other improvements a new parking lot has been added at the north end of the park by the old water plant.

I want to thank Katie Benoit Hake and Catharin Lewis for their efforts in organizing our Museum files. They have taken advantage of the Museum being closed for this activity. In addition Katie has gotten the League City Volunteer Fire Department to turn over their old photos and allow us to curate their history.

Stay well and stay cool!

Ronnie Richards

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281-797-1970

LCHS Board Members

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What is this??

**This is LCHS's very own
QR code design!**

QR (or Quick Response) codes are an easy way to lead people to our website and give information about our buildings and exhibits. Simply open the camera on your phone, aim at QR code, and you are directed to our website! Codes can be modified to direct users to other websites hosting detailed information. The content can be video, audio, pictorial or a combination of all three! Information can also be updated or changed at any time allowing it to be relevant and current. Look for these on site in the future...

TRY IT OUT!

THE SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT IN TEXAS

By Deborah Gammon

August 2020

This month I am going to discuss the 19th Amendment. August 26, 2020 is the 100th anniversary of the American woman receiving the right to vote. It is defined on Wikipedia as:

Women's suffrage is the right of women to vote in elections. Beginning in the mid-19th century, aside from the work being done by women for broad-based economic and political equality and for social reforms, women sought to change voting laws to allow them to vote.

The Texas state legislature in a special session voted to ratify the 19th Amendment on June 28, 1919. Texas was the first Southern state to do so. More was needed as law required 36 states to vote in the affirmative. November 2, 1920 was the first time women across America cast votes. Only 36% of women voted in 1920. I'm going to only look at a few of Texas suffragettes beginning with Minnie Fisher Cunningham.

The Houston Post article announced the election of Mrs. Cunningham of Galveston as the president of the Texas Woman' Suffrage association on May 15, 1915.

Who was Mrs. Cunningham of Galveston?

There is much written about Mrs. Cunningham on several websites. I use newspaper research for a profile of my subjects.

Minnie was born in the farming community of New Waverly, Texas on March 19, 1882. Her parents were Horatio and Sallie C. Abercrombie Fisher of Alabama. On the 1860 Walker County, Tx census, H.W. Fisher of Alabama was living just 2 doors down from the Abercrombie family. Sallie was just 15 years of age. The 1880 census shows them to have an 18-year age difference. Minnie first shows up on the 1900 census in Walker County. Minnie attended the University of Texas in Austin. She graduated in 1901 with a Pharmacy degree.

HOUSTON DAILY POST: SATURDAY MORNING

GARDEN PARTY TENDERED TO VISITING SUFFRAGISTS

Miss Annette Finnigan Was Hostess at Brazos Court Friday Night—Houston Women Assisted in Receiving Line.

A brilliant and beautiful female to the Texas suffrage convention held in Galveston this week, was the garden party given last evening by Miss Annette Finnigan at the Brazos court to meet Senator Helen Ring Robinson, Miss Kate M. Gordon of New Orleans, the guests and delegates of the convention. It was a charming personal compliment from Miss Finnigan to the visitors and the invitations issued last week brought out one of the largest assemblages of the season.

The court, which seems to grow in beauty each year, was especially attractive, the ivy hung walls of the hotel, the shrubbery and flowering plants forming an ideal setting for the hospitality.

Red, and white oleander bloomed on every side, immense rustic baskets of Easter lilies or pink gladioli adorned the tables in the loges, and the pergola, while at intervals down each side of the court, rose tall standards topped by lights gleaming with subdued brilliancy through their opaque globes.

Beneath the musician's gallery, where Berge's orchestra, of five pieces discoursed sweet music, twinkled the words "Votes for Women" in the same old-fashioned bearing in gold lettering on a broad band of crimson ribbon decorating the basket of red blooms on the punch table.

Beyond the court, across the driveway from which the terrace slopes to the bayou, were strung festoons of golden incandescent lights, with the yellow banners of the National Suffrage association flying at intervals down the line.

From 8 until 9 o'clock there was a reception when Miss Finnigan, assisted by a number of Houston ladies, presented the visitors to the town people. Among the out of town guests being Senator Helen Ring Robinson of Colorado, Miss Kate M. Gordon of New Orleans, Mrs. Cunningham of Galveston, elected Friday as president of the Texas Woman's Suffrage association, Mrs. Keasey, Mrs. J. O. Creighton, Mrs. Daniel and Mrs. J. F. Walker, all of Austin, Mrs. R. R. Armatrong, Mrs. Wendell Spence and Mrs. Adoue of Dallas, Mrs. D. E. Leary, Miss Marion Fenwick, Mrs. W. L. Dunn, Mrs. King, Mrs. Maury, Mrs. Vanderhoefen of San Antonio; Miss Kate Hunter of Palestine and Mrs. G. Scott Shannon of Galveston and others.

At 9 o'clock the clever farce "How the Vote Was Won," by Cleely Hamilton, was presented by local talent, the cast including Mrs. Catherine Talliaferro, Mrs. Lockhart Wallis, Misses Sidney Dunlap, Sarah Roach, Maud Young, Julia Mason and Elizabeth Talliaferro and Messrs. Hugh Potter and Whittier. The evident enjoyment of the audience of this feature of the evening vouched their appreciation of its merit.

Following the play, punch was served by Mrs. Lulu Bryan Rambaud and Mrs. John E. Green, while presiding at the refreshment table at the opposite end of the garden, where cream and cake were served, were Mrs. R. W. Knox and Mrs. Jeff Miller. Assisting Miss Finnigan in receiving were: Mesdames Lockhart Wallis, H. F. Ring, Gentry Waldo, J. O. Ross, Betha Bryan, Pearl Ross Hudson, Henry Lee Borden, A. C. Ford, W. H. Pain, Mabel E. Smith, Hester Myer, W. W. Torrey, C. J. Robertson, Misses Ima Hog, Mary Waldo, Julia Mason and Altha Jones.

Minnie Fisher worked for one year as a pharmacist in Huntsville according to the "Handbook of Texas" online. She got involved with the Suffrage movement because of pay inequity where she worked.

She gave up her career to marry Beverley J. "Bill" Cunningham about 1902.

B. J. Cunningham was in the insurance business with Texas Prudential Company. The couple were childless and lived at 3128 Ave. 0 ½ on the 1910 census. Her mother, Sallie Fisher with daughter, Marion and son, Horatio Fisher, lived in

Galveston also on the 1910 census. Minnie's sister, Marion Fish was living in Galveston early on with cousins when she began her teaching career. On the 1940 census, Marion Fisher was living at the same residence, 3128 Ave. 0 ½ as her younger sister did when Minnie was married to B. J. Cunningham. Miss Marion Fisher died August 30, 1950 and her sister, Minnie is mentioned in her obituary dated September 1, 1950 in Galveston Daily News.

In 1914, The Galveston Daily News acknowledges that the Suffrage movement with Mrs. Cunningham was crossing the causeway and coming to the Mainland. The clipping below left is from the Galveston Daily News on Dec. 13, 1914.

Miss Fisher Rites Friday

Funeral services for Marion Fisher, 22, retired Galveston elementary school superintendent who came to Galveston as a teacher in 1902, will be held at 3 p. m. Friday at Malloy & Son funeral home.

Rev. E. H. Gibson, pastor of the Trinity Episcopal Church, will officiate and burial will be in New City Cemetery.

Miss Fisher died Wednesday night at John Sealy Hospital. She was born in New Waverly, Texas, April 12, 1867, and attended Sam Houston Normal, now a state college, University of Wisconsin, and Columbia University.

She began teaching here in 1902 and was elected superintendent of elementary schools in 1920. She retired from that position in 1939 and taught in Davy Crockett school one year before opening the "Little Folks" school in her home on the corner of 22nd and Ave. 0 ¼ for preschool children.

She moved to the Letitia Rosenberg home for women in 1948.

Survivors include two sisters, Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham, active in state political circles, and Mrs. Comer Campbell, both of New Waverly; four nieces, Mrs. M. A. Milliken, and Mrs. Elizabeth Plummer, both of New Waverly; Mrs. Patricia Smith, of Austin, and Mrs. S. H. Elliott of New York City; and one nephew, R. M. Traylor, of Coatee.

Found in the LEAGUE CITY: A HISTORY FROM 1913-1924 by Judy Warco, Chairwoman published in 1986. PAGE 157: WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CLUB ORGANIZED:

"Last Saturday night Miss Pearl Penfield of Galveston delivered her lecture on Woman's Suffrage to a good house at the high school auditorium. She was accompanied by Mrs. B. J. Cunningham, who is president of the Galveston society. At the close of the address, Mrs. O.V. King was made temporary chairman and Mrs. L.E. Johnson secretary, and a club was organized with the following as officers: President, Mrs. M. Stoddard; vice president, Mrs. J.E. Walker, secretary, Mrs. Perry Johnson, treasurer, Mrs. O. V. King.

EQUAL SUFFRAGISTS TO INVADE MAINLAND

GALVESTON ORGANIZATION PLANS A CAMPAIGN TO INCLUDE TOWNS THROUGHOUT COUNTY.

Galveston's equal suffragists are to carry their campaign across Galveston Bay to the mainland communities of Galveston County. This was determined at a meeting of the Galveston Equal Suffrage Association held Saturday in the T. M. C. A. building. At this session final arrangements were made for Mrs. B. J. Cunningham, president of the organization, to make the mainland trip.

Starting from Galveston this week, Mrs. Cunningham will visit Texas City, Virginia Point, La Marque, Dickinson, League City, Arcadia, Hitchcock, Algon and other Galveston County communities. The issue of equal suffrage she will discuss at these towns and will form committees. These committees, as they develop, will later be organized into smaller equal suffrage leagues, which will affiliate with the parent league in the city of Galveston.

A lecturer of statewide importance in equal suffrage work is also to be brought to Galveston at a date yet to be announced.

The "whirlwind campaign" planned to start immediately after Thanksgiving, is to start as soon as the holidays are ended. A house-to-house canvass will be made, literature distributed and a general effort made to spread the propaganda about the city.

Those at the meeting were: The president, Mrs. B. J. Cunningham; Mrs. G. Scott Shannon, Mrs. Mary Fowler Hornsfield, Mrs. Edward F. Harris, Mrs. K. C. Rempert, Mrs. J. C. Reider, Mrs. P. Potular, Mrs. W. E. Conklin, Miss Annie Hill, Mrs. T. Thompson.

The new society will meet at an early date, to choose delegates to the State Convention in Galveston, the 12th, 13th, and 14th of this month. Following is the list of members: Mesdames L. E. Johnson, R. Benson, M. Stoddard, J. E. Walker, E. Salmon, J. I. Johnson, W. P. Dolson, O. V. King; Messrs. Perry Johnson, O. V. King, F. S. Whitson, R. B. Johnson, Dudley Dallas, and P. L. Yolland."

(Mrs. King was Flora Parker King; Mrs. R. Benson was Mary McCarty Benson; Mrs. L. E. Johnson was Adelaide Walker Johnson; Mrs. M. Stoddard was Mary Castello Stoddard, widow of William M. Stoddard; Mrs. J. E. Walker was Mayme Kirkham Walker; Mrs. Perry Johnson was Margaret Lynch Johnson. These ladies are buried in Fairview Cemetery, N. Kansas St.)

This snippet of the article from The Galveston Daily News, July 31, 1928, shows the standing of Mrs. Minnie F. Cunningham when she ran for the U. S. Senate from Texas. Her husband, B. J. Cunningham passed away during the campaign. He is buried in Galveston.

On May 23, 1944, Mrs. Minnie F. Cunningham threw her hat into the ring to run for Texas governor.

Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham, fifth in Saturday's United States senate primary, said today that she did not plan to aid either Senator Earle B. Mayfield or Congressman Tom Connally in the run-off race for that office Aug. 26.

The vote in the contest for the nomination for United States senator: Mayfield, 172,272; Connally, 156,291; Alvin Owsley, former national commander of the American Legion, 111,456; Blanton, 106,095; Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham, pioneer woman suffragist, 23,915; McLemore, 8,971.

This is from p. 3 of the Lubbock Morning Avalanche in Lubbock. The clipping proves that Mrs. Cunningham had returned to her home of New Waverly. I have not been successful in finding her on the 1940 U.S. Census but we know that in 1944 she was living in New Waverly.

Mrs. Cunningham was not successful in her bid for governor of Texas.

Mrs. Cunningham Seeks State Post

AUSTIN, May 22. (AP)—Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham of New Waverly was the fifth candidate to pay a filing fee for the governor's race in the state Democratic primary election.

The \$100 check with a letter announcing her candidacy was received today by Democratic Executive Committee Secretary Charles E. Simons. Blanks for formal application with the required information were sent to her.

Other paid-up candidates are Gov. Coke R. Stevenson, A. M. Ferguson of Howe, W. J. Minton of Sherman and Martin Jones of Nacogdoches.

Former Committee Member

Mrs. Cunningham was active in the movement for woman suffrage in Texas, and has been connected with agricultural extension work recently. She was in charge of women's work for the Democratic national committee in 1926-27 and the first woman delegate at large from Texas.

Mrs. Cunningham, 62, said she would use the offices of the discontinued Draft-Dobie-For-Governor movement in Austin as her headquarters. An announcement from the Dobie group said they would support Mrs. Cunningham "in votes and money."

Mrs. Cunningham said her platform was for mobilization of full strength behind the war effort. She said she favored a registration system for voting instead of the poll tax. She said she was for equality in balloting, and in view of the 14th amendment "I do not see why negroes should not vote in the primaries."

In doing this research, I discovered an article published in Austin American-Statesman on Oct. 7, 1990 in the Lifestyle section. The article was about Minnie's great, great niece, Trish Cunningham who was researching her ancestor. I learned that Minnie was a delegate to the national Democratic convention in San Francisco in 1920. This was the first convention to admit women to the floor. I also discovered that Eleanor Roosevelt credited Minnie for teaching her the fundamentals of politics at the convention. Also, that same year, Minnie went to Washington, D. C. to help organize the national League of Women Voters. In 1953, Minnie helped form the Texas Democratic Women's State committee. The last campaign Minnie worked for was the John F. Kennedy Presidency in 1960.

Last clipping I have is Mrs. Cunningham's obituary.

Mrs. Cunningham's remains were returned to New Waverly where she joined her parents and her brother, Horatio W. Fisher, Jr. who died during WWI in France. They are buried in the Hardy Cemetery in New Waverly.

Minnie Cunningham, Texas Politician, Dies

HUNTSVILLE (AP)—Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham, prominent in Texas politics for three decades, died in a Conroe hospital yesterday at the age of 82.

Death was attributed to age and a fractured hip suffered in a fall six weeks ago.

Mrs. Cunningham, who lived at New Waverly in the Huntsville area, was a Democratic candidate for the United States Senate in 1928 and for governor in 1944.

Known as "Mrs. Democrat of Texas," she fought for women's rights and founded the National League of Women Voters.

Mrs. Cunningham was 62 when she ran for governor. In a contest with eight rivals she polled 44,039 votes.

She married B. J. Cunningham, a Galveston insurance man, after graduating in 1902 from the University of Texas school of pharmacy at Galveston. Her husband died in 1927.

The funeral service will be held Friday at the New Waverly Baptist Church.



The Historic Area by Michael Peterson

In the Historic District of League City, we are blessed to live in such a beautiful place with so many amazing creatures. We not only have many four-legged friends running below our houses, up the trees and around the yards (opossum, raccoons, squirrels, etc.), but we have the ones with wings flying throughout the historical area. Over the last few months, we have seen an abundance of beautiful bird of many makes, colors, sizes and sounds. Beautiful Egrets, Doves, Hawks, Owls and even Bald Eagles. In late fall and early spring, we get prepared for the evening as we enjoy the sounds of Barred Owls. They are layered throughout the Historic District of League City nesting in the majestic trees we have to offer. Many mornings we will wake up to their territorial calls when speaking with other paired Barred Owls. If you have not heard the deep calls of the Barred Owls as they speak to each other throughout the evening or even early mornings, you need to listen to the unique sounds via the link below. It is a sound you will not forget knowing they are there guarding their homes while looking over ours in the Historical District of League City.

Remembering.....



Pictured Above: A LCHS Meeting and Ice Cream Social which was held outdoors “I think” at Ernie Randall’s Gun Range probably in the late 1990’s. This was so much fun and the ice cream and fellowship were just wonderful! Let me know if you remember that the location and time period were different. (Diana (diana.dornak1@verizon.net))

Pictured Below: The 2009 Teddy Bear Parade – To the right are Charlene and Doug McKee having fun!. And....these little ones probably have probably graduated high school!!





If You Are Not A Member, We Are Hoping You Will Join!!

League City Historical Society

Thank you for being a member. 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 77574

CATEGORY

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Student/ Active Military | \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Senior (60 and over) | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Senior Couple | \$35 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Single (Individual) | \$35 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Family | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Supporting Patron | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Life Membership | \$400 |

BUSINESS CATEGORY

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Business Member | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Business Partner | \$200 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Business Leader | \$300 |

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.
- Check if we may list your name and address in our membership directory. This publication will only be distributed to LCCHS members and will not be used on our website.

Please Note: Membership is for one year and covers you until January 2021.