

THE

HISTORIAN

www.hancockcountyhistoricalsociety.com

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

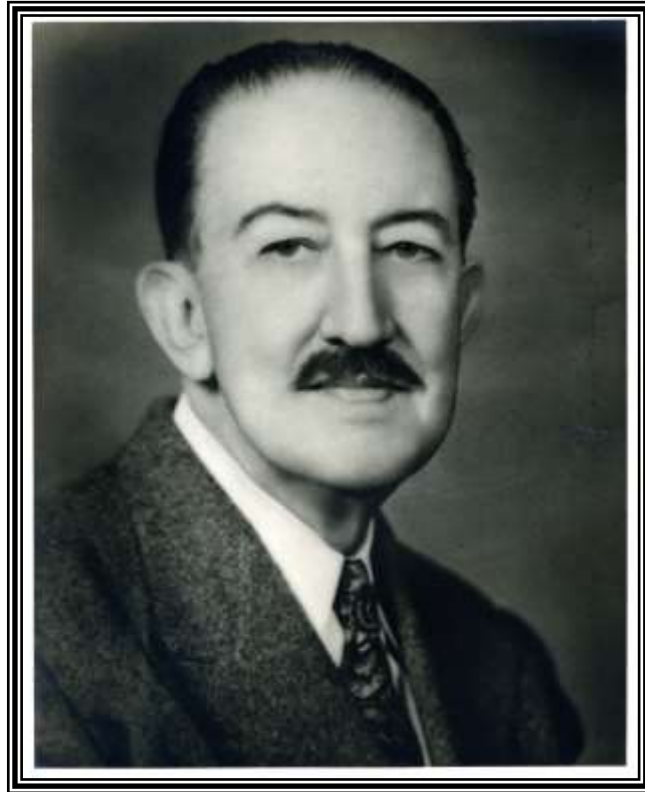
May 2018

COMING EVENTS AT LOBRANO HOUSE

The monthly luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, May 17, 2018, at noon at the Kate Lobrano House. The guest speaker will be Mike Fitzwilliam who will speak on his book, *Do You Know How Picayune Got Its Name?* **Reservations are required** and may be made by calling 467-4090. **Respectfully we must request that you please call by noon on Wednesday, May 16,** to make your reservation in order to help us plan seating which is limited to forty-eight people and to apprise us of the number of lunches to order. Lunch is \$12.00, payable at the door, and it is catered by Almost Home Catering, Michelle Nichols, chef.



MEMORIAL DAY
MONDAY, MAY 28, 2018



Charles
Moreau
Founder and
editor of the
Sea Coast Echo

A HISTORY OF THE *SEA COAST ECHO*

By
James Keating M.D.

The first known newspaper published in Hancock County was the *Gainesville Advocate* known to be present briefly around the time of the Civil War. Early newspaper technology was woefully primitive in that era. Publication of a newspaper was labor intensive with manual letter-by-letter type setting of galleys attached to a simple hand powered iron printing press producing one

sheet of paper at a time. The early newspapers of the 19th century had primitive hand press technology, very few pages, and owners with limited vision and without long term commitment. The important story about newspapers of the past in Hancock County involves a fearless, eighteen year old entrepreneur in 1892 and his small newspaper that became a catalyst for a booming local economy and a role model for other editors and publishers in 20th century Mississippi.

Charles 'Charlie' G. Moreau (1873-1942) was the founder and editor of the *Sea Coast Echo* (*Echo*) for fifty years. An early investor from 1892-1894 was W.L. May, who

THE
HISTORIAN
OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Eddie Coleman, Editor
James Keating, Publisher

Published monthly by the
HANCOCK COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Charles Gray, Executive Director
Jackie Allain, President
Jim Thriffiley, First Vice President
Bryan Frater, Second Vice President
Georgie Morton, Treasurer
Beverly Frater, Secretary
James Keating, Publicity
John Gibson, Historian
Ames Kergosien, Member at Large

MAILING ADDRESS:

P. O. Box 3356
Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi 39521

PHYSICAL ADDRESS:

108 Cue Street

Telephone [228] 467-4090

Email address:

hancockcountyhis@bellsouth.net

Website:

www.hancockcountyhistoricalsociety.com
Marianne Plum, Webmaster

**LOBRANO HOUSE
HOURS**

MONDAY — FRIDAY
10:00AM — 3:00PM
Closed: 12:00—1:00 (lunch)

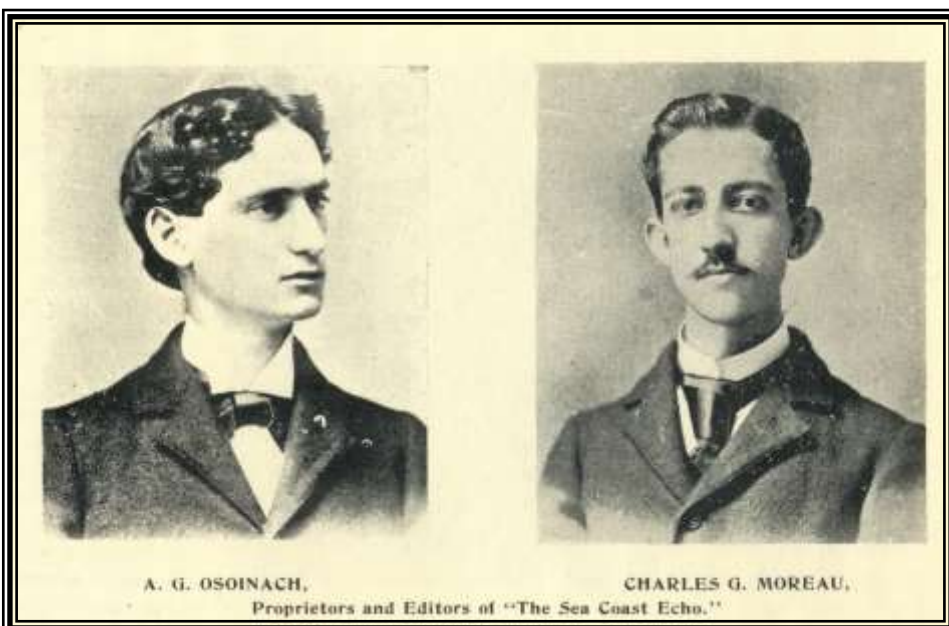
MISSION STATEMENT

“TO PRESERVE THE GENERAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF HANCOCK COUNTY AND TO PRESERVE THE KATE LOBRANO HOUSE AND COLLECTIONS THEREIN; TO RESEARCH AND INTERPRET LIFE IN HANCOCK COUNTY; AND TO ENCOURAGE AN APPRECIATION OF AND INTEREST IN HISTORICAL PRESERVATION.”

sold his interest to A. G. Osoinach. But in 1897 Osoinach sold his interest to Moreau, who became the sole owner. Moreau was born in New Orleans and was the son of Henri Moreau and Elizabeth Legier Moreau. Henri Moreau was a native of France. Accordingly, Charles Moreau was bilingual and Roman Catholic. He attended parochial and public schools in New Orleans. However, because of his failing health, his family retired to Bay St. Louis in 1889. Moreau worked briefly as a reporter with A. J. Hart of the *Gulf Coast Progress* in Bay St. Louis and then with W. L. May at the *Pass Christian Beacon*. He married Angeline A. Piccaluga of New Orleans in 1897. Charlie and “Minnie” as they were known around town lived in a lovely home of Spanish architecture at 116 Carroll Ave. Their only child, Marie Louise Moreau, died in the influenza epidemic of 1918.

The first edition of the *Echo* was published on January 9, 1892, with the motto above the date line “fearless in all things.” Moreau was young, intelligent, witty,

handsome, and devoted to the county he served. The weekly paper was successful from the start because merchants supported him with more than adequate advertising. The *Echo* carried news of Waveland, Pearlington, Nicholson, and Pass Christian and reprinted articles of interest from other newspapers from other Mississippi towns and from national newspapers and magazines. The *Echo* was the “official journal” for Hancock County and Bay St. Louis. Public notices of local county and city governments were mandated to be published in the *Echo*. The charges for these notices as well as commercial advertising and subscription fees were the sources of revenue for the newspaper. The *Echo* has made a good profit over the years and has always been considered a good investment by all of its owners. The first editions of the *Echo* published weekly were frequently four pages with local news and advertising appearing on the inside pages. The front and back pages contained the national news and more advertising.



The above photo of A. G. Osoinach and Charles G. Moreau was taken from the 1894 publication *Along the Gulf*.

Biweekly publication did not occur until the 1970s.

The *Echo* cleverly included something for everyone's reading pleasure in Hancock County: "fashion notes, household hints, home remedies, a bit of philosophy, comments on religion and education, history, politics, and even little lessons in good manners." Moreau chose the name *Sea Coast Echo* because "there were too many Gulf Coast this and Gulf Coast that." He felt that "Gulf Coast" was part of many business names and was overdone. On the other hand, *Sea Coast Echo* carried meaning and was appropriate and poetic.

With the economic backing of his retired parents, Moreau made a huge investment in newly invented state of the art printing equipment. His first acquisition was a Mergenthaler Linotype Machine (#14) which cost \$5,200. This linotype machine was a "hot metal" typesetting system that acquired its name because it produces an entire line of metal type at once, hence a "line-of-type." This technology was significant improvement over the previous industrial standard, i.e. manual, "letter-by-letter" typesetting using a composing stick and drawers of metal letters and numbers. In addition, Moreau ordered a Miehle Job and Newspaper Printing Press from the company factory in Chicago.

By 1902 Moreau needed a larger workplace to house his successful newspaper and job printing business. Fearlessly, he proposed constructing his own two story building. A site on the corner of Apothecary and Front Streets (later renamed State and Beach Boulevard) was selected because of its proximity to the Courthouse and the new Hancock County Bank. The lot was purchased for \$1,115. The *Sea Coast Echo* building was de-



The home of the *Sea Coast Echo* from 1903 until 1956 stood at the corner of State Street and North Beach Blvd. The building is currently occupied by the restaurant 200 North Beach.

signed by the retired architect John Henry, and constructed by the builder, Gaston G. Gardebled. With the completion of this building in 1904, the *Echo* became the first newspaper in Mississippi to own its own building. In addition the structure was a good investment and was the home of the paper until 1956. Moreau believed that a local boom economy existed and set an example for the business community investing in a modern day "skyscraper."

With the vision of a town father or county supervisor, Moreau recognized the crying need in the local economy for a banking sector to promote and facilitate commercial transactions. In 1903 he proposed the idea of a second bank, named Merchants Bank with fellow "movers and shakers" Walter J. Gex, Sr., and merchant, John Osoinach. The Merchants Bank was incorporated in 1903 with an imposing list of founders/stockholders which included many of the prominent names in the county (See *The Historian*, February 2018.). The bank rented the corner portion of the *Echo* building on Beach Boulevard for four years until its permanent building next to the railroad tracks was completed

at a cost of approximately \$10,000 in 1907. Moreau served as a director and later as president of the bank. Thus, the story of the *Echo* became the story of the economy of Hancock County.

Moreau believed in the economic prospects of Hancock County for the forthcoming 20th century. The local merchants of the county not only supported the newspaper, they included the publisher in their business ventures. In fact, he often had a leadership role in such important infrastructure projects such as the bank. Moreau was an astute businessman and his optimism was contagious at a significant turning point in the economic history of Hancock County. He had an abiding faith in the land values of the county. He advocated personal ownership of homes and served as president of the local homestead association for many years. He invested extensively in real estate seeing a permanent intrinsic value in the land itself.

Moreau organized and participated in many local civic organizations that constituted the essential social fabric of the community such as the Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, school

board, Democratic Party, Yacht Club, Knights of Columbus, King's Daughters and Sons Hospital Board, and the Hancock County Board of Election Commissioners. He wrote in his memoir that his aim was to "construct, build, or mold such public opinion that would prove a betterment both to the community and its citizens. [I] have striven to contribute to every worthwhile endeavor."

Moreau died suddenly and unexpectedly in 1942. A. J. Favre purchased the *Echo* from Moreau's estate and became its publisher and editor. The *Echo* underwent several changes of ownership from 1942 to 1977. In 1977 it was bought by James Lancaster and family and incorporated as the Bay St. Louis Newspapers, Inc.

Under Favre's leadership in 1956, the *Echo* moved into the "Woodman of the World" building at 112 South Second Street because of the need for more space. In that same year the paper purchased a more modern "offset" Harris S-7L printing press that had "cold type" rather than "hot type" technology. Offset printing, which is still used at the *Echo* today, is a technique whereby the image is transferred or "offset" from a thin laser-edge aluminum plate/sheet wrapped around a metal cylinder/roller to a rubber blanket (cover) wrapped around an adjacent roller. The ink image is then printed on a sheet of paper that is passed through the rollers. The *Echo's* continued growth necessitated a larger building and in 1977 the old Ford dealership constructed by Robert Camors at 124 Court Street was purchased. This building is the present home of the *Echo*.

Continuity was restored to the *Echo* with the appointment of Ellis C. Cuevas as editor and publisher in 1978. He retired in 2000, but continued part time until 2009.

Cuevas was a longtime community activist in the tradition of Charles Moreau. He is a native of Waveland, currently living in Bay St. Louis, and his family has been residents of the Gulf Coast for over two hundred years. He has received numerous awards of appreciation such as the Hancock Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Citizen of the Year (1991) and induction into the Mississippi Press Association Hall of Fame (1998). Cuevas was also executive vice president of the parent corporation, Bay St. Louis Newspapers, Inc.

The current editor of the *Echo* is Geoff Belcher, and the publisher is James R. "Randy" Ponder. They put out the same quality newspaper as their predecessors. These courageous men survived Hurricane Katrina in 2005. By cutting a deal with a former employer of Belcher in Pikeville, Kentucky, the men were able to produce a four page full color special edition just days after the storm. Before Katrina the circulation of the newspaper was approximately 7,800 copies, but it is presently about 5,500. Belcher felt it was vital to tell people's stories during the recovery to keep up morale. He also acted as a watchdog over

public agencies charged with leading the recovery efforts. Belcher embraces a mission of providing the best news/information and actively promoting the general welfare and prosperity of Hancock County. This has been the tradition and history of the *Sea Coast Echo* for the last 126 years.

SOURCES:

- Belcher, Geoff. Personal interview. April 3, 2018.
- Crump, Nannie-Mayes. "Charles G. Moreau." *Sea Coast Echo*. Bay St. Louis, MS, 1941.
- Cuevas, Ellis C. "100 Years...*Sea Coast Echo* Celebrates Century of Continuous Publication." *Sea Coast Echo*. 28 June 1942, Bay St. Louis, MS.
- Cuevas, Ellis C. Personal interview. April 5, 2018.
- Moreau, Charles G. "Echoes of Yester year." *Golden Jubilee Edition*. Bay St. Louis, MS, 1942.
- "Hancock County Newspapers of the Past." *Sea Coast Echo*. Golden Jubilee Edition, Bay St. Louis, MS, 1942.
- Scharff, Robert G. *Louisiana's Loss, Mississippi's Gain*. Lawrenceville, VA: Brunswick Publishing Corp., 1999.



Originally the Woodman of the World building, and currently the shops of Century Hall at 112 South Second Street, this building was the home of the *Sea Coast Echo* from 1956 until 1977.



This is the current home of the *Sea Coast Echo* at 124 Court Street in Bay St. Louis.

Stuckey, Mike. "Covering the Story of Their Lives." *Rising from the Ruin*. October 26, 2005. msnbc.com. Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.

2018 SUMMER YOUTH PROJECTS

The Hancock County Tree Registry will participate in the 2018 Summer Youth Programs, "Libraries Rock," at the Pass Christian Public Library. Shawn Prychitko and Anita Warner of the Hancock County Historical Society and the Bay-Waveland Garden Club will present "Trees Rock" on July 11, 2018. For more information please contact the Tree Registry at treeregistry@gmail.com.



SEEKING ORAL HISTORY NARRATORS

Daniel Horowitz, a researcher from the New School University is conducting oral history interviews of ecological resilience and life in Bay St. Louis and Environs. These are hour and half long in-person interviews with a particular focus on how living in the unique environment of Bay St. Louis has shaped the history of the narrator's life. We are looking for diverse perspectives and stories that challenge the typical notion of "environment." These interviews will be made available in an online archive with selections published in print (participants will have full control over how their interview will be disseminated. Please email me at horod144@newschool.edu if you are interested in arranging an interview or have any questions, comments or suggestions.

Daniel will be in Bay St. Louis working on this project all summer.



Recently the Historical Society received additional copies of *Dearest Arlette: Everyday Life in Postwar America and France, 1945-1955, as Recorded in the Letters of Two Reunited Families*. The book was written by Emily Hosmer de Montluzin with Emily Lorraine de Montluzin.

Copies may be purchased at the Kate Loblano House.

NEW MEMBERS

Pat Bourgeois
Bay St. Louis, MS

Amy Jobe & Julie Chandler
Bay St. Louis

Patricia and Chris Cheek
Bay St. Louis, MS

Clyde and Mary Koerner
Bay St. Louis, MS



Michelle Nichols Presents

Almost Home

www.dinnemthings.com

Catering

228-332-2334



Steve B. Treutel
Vice President
Senior Financial Advisor
 Mississippi Gulf Coast
 (228) 385-6307

Merrill Lynch Wealth Management makes available products and services offered by Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith incorporated, a registered broker-dealer and member SIPC, and other subsidiaries of Bank of America Corporation. All rights reserved.
 AD-06-12-0048 ARSOT2V1-10-11 Code 453007PM-0612

The Sisters Series
 By L.L. Lee



Taxing Tallula
Found in San Antonio
Murder by the Bayou
Ten Days in Sicily

Available at Bay Books, Amazon.com, Kindle. Lee3731@bellsouth.net Amazon.com/author/lllee



Dan Bader
228.466.5165
Interiors / Exteriors
 528 State Street
 Bay St. Louis MS 39520

PAINTING & PRESSURE CLEANING

FORD REALTY
 (601) 798-6202 800-354-FORD(3673)

Residential, Timberland, Ranches, Commercial



MARTHA FORD, Broker, GRI SFR
 MARTYFORD@BELLSOUTH.NET
 CELL: 601-590-2988

1004 Memorial Blvd
 P.O. Box 418
 Picayune, MS 39468
 Fax 601-799-0202

Est. 1949

www.fordrity.com

JOHN "CORKY" HADDEN
 Financial Advisor

RAYMOND JAMES®

T 228.466.9888 843 Highway 90
 F 228.466.9978 Bay Saint Louis, MS 39520
 corky.hadden@raymondjames.com
 www.RaymondJames.com

Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., member FINRA/SIPC.

BSL

"A Place Apart"

Robert and Samantha Mc Raney
 and Family



Donuts • Pastries • Breakfast • King Cakes
228-466-5037 308 HWY 90
 Bay St. Louis, MS 39520

Susanne (Sue) Ashman ABR, CRS, GRI, SRS Broker

Office: (228) 467-5454
 Cell: (228) 216-7864
 Fax: (228) 466-4561
 Email: sueashman@aol.com
 www.Ashman-Mollere.com

Serving the MS Gulf Coast since 1928

ASHMAN-MOLLERE REALTY


418 Highway 90
 Waveland MS 39576



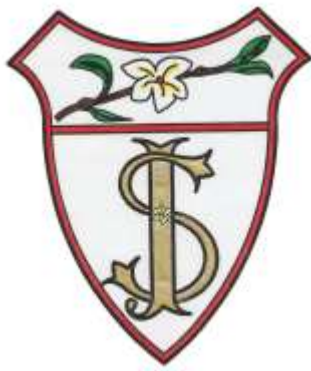
Bay Cottages
 Historic Bay St. Louis Ms.
 Vacation Rental

305 Main
 228-466-4793

www.vrbo.com (ID #313124 & 400259)



Stop by the Historical Society to buy one of the Kate Lobrano House Plaques.



In deepest appreciation from the 1967 graduating class of Saint Joseph's Academy to the Hancock County Historical Society for its continuing work in preserving the history of Hancock County.

Bay St Louis:
 412 Hwy 90
 228-466-4498

Biloxi:
 2505 Pass Rd
 228-385-1177

Diamondhead:
 5400 Indian Hill
 228-467-2272



SOUTHGROUP
 INSURANCE SERVICES
 GULF COAST

- We offer Personal, Business, Life and Health Insurance
- We help our clients save money and get more value.
- We are Trusted Choice and have been awarded the Best Practices Designation.

For more information, please visit our website:
 www.southgroupgulfcoast.com
 central fax: 888-415-8922

READ! ESCAPE! ENJOY!
 SUPPORT YOUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY.



\$20.00





\$20.00



\$20.00

BOOKS BY PAUL LAVIOLETTE AVAILABLE AT THE HANCOCK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HANCOCK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 3356
BAY ST. LOUIS, MS 39521

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION

U. S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 87
BAY ST. LOUIS, MS

HANCOCK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

POST OFFICE BOX 3356
BAY ST. LOUIS, MISSISSIPPI 39521

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE AND ZIP _____]

PHONE (____) _____

Email address _____

ANNUAL DUES—HOUSEHOLD—\$30____— DONATION \$ _____