

THE

HISTORIAN

www.hancockcountyhistoricalsociety.com

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

July 2019

COMING EVENTS AT LOBRANO HOUSE

The monthly luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, July 18, 2019, at noon at the Kate Lobrano House. The speaker will be James Randolph who will speak on the changes in Hancock County in the last one hundred years—people, places, and things. **Reservations are required** and may be made by calling 467-4090. **Respectfully we must request that you please call by noon on Wednesday, July 17**, to make your reservation in order to help us plan seating which is limited to fifty-four people and to apprise us of the number of lunches to order. **Lunch is \$14.00 for members and \$15.00 for nonmembers**, payable at the door. It is catered by Almost Home Catering, Michelle Nichols, chef. The lunch menu is bourbon pork chops, red potatoes, salad, rolls, and crème de menthe cupcakes.

ANNUAL CEMETERY TOUR

Even though October is still a few months away, it's not too early to begin thinking about and planning the Cemetery Tour. The 25nd Annual Cemetery Tour will be held on Halloween Night, Thursday, October 31, 2019. Needed are volunteers to prepare the cemetery for the tour, to portray citizens buried there, and to act as guides. To volunteer, please call 228-467-4090. All actors and guides must be members of the Historical Society.



This house in the Kiln was built by Captain Sam Favre in 1859. The seventh generation of the Favre family lives in the house today.

History of the Kiln (1840—1932)

By
James Keating, M.D.

The Kiln is an old town or commercial center/port that played an important role in the economic history of Hancock County. In fact the economy of this centrally located community over the last two hundred years has experienced episodic boom and bust. Furthermore changing market demands for its industrial products and modern technology have greatly influenced its prosperity over the past. Even so unlike other old commercial ports in the county like Logtown, Gainesville, and

Pearlington, The Kiln has survived as a center of gravity for commerce and industry and is actually flourishing and growing in this twenty first century. The history of the Kiln can be divided into two periods. The first includes the pioneer and Great Sawmill Era (1840-1932) which will be the subject of this article. The second period which tells the story of the rest of the twentieth century and the early twenty first century will be addressed in a forthcoming article. Incidentally "The Kiln," as it is affectionately referred to by locals, owes its existence and unique character to the Jourdan River which runs through this charming, beloved hamlet.

A lush riverine ecological system inhabits the Hancock County

THE

HISTORIAN

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Eddie Coleman, Editor
James Keating, PublisherPublished monthly by the
**HANCOCK COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY****2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**Charles Gray, Executive Director
Bryan Frater, Second Vice President
Virginia Olander, Director of Communications
James Keating, Publicity
Jim Codling, Historian
Chris Roth, Membership**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.”

coastal flood plain along the upper reaches of the serpentine Jourdan River. Artesian springs feed this waterway which historically has been a magnet for Indian settlements and the timber industries of yesteryear. Namely, Choctaw and Muskogean Indians settled on the southern bluffs in the location of the modern day town of Kiln. Oxbow lakes and riverside fresh water wild rice growth augmented Indian agriculture harvests of corn, beans, and sweet potatoes. River spear fishing was often accomplished at night with torches to attract fish such as fresh water catfish, striped bass, and large mouth bass. Shell middens attest to Indian love of shellfish. The Jourdan River is named after Noel Jourdan, who was a pioneer settler who acquired a Spanish land grant in the area of the present day town of Diamondhead.

The first known Spanish land grant in present day Kiln was granted to Jean Baptiste Nicaize (Necaise) whose father was born in Paris, France. A ferry/barge was established in the early nineteenth century for crossing the river about four hundred feet east of present-day Highway 609 at a site called Pauline's Landing. Subsequently an early small school and general store were opened nearby.

During the 1840's this village was known as the Jourdan River Settlement which became a small commercial center. In particular, French settlers built kilns to produce charcoal and naval stores from pine tree sap for caulking ships. Because the area was a port on a navigable river when land transportation was not possible, early saw mills and kilns were able to produce naval stores and other timber products for export to New Orleans and Mobile such as firewood, charcoal, stove wood, turpentine, and other naval stores. For this reason

the village, eventually, affectionately became known as “The Kiln.” Thus the Pioneer Era (1840-1890) of the local timber industry commenced. As a result schooners came and went up and down the Jourdan River similar to the activity on the Pearl River. The invention of the steam driven circular saw made possible greater volumes of lumber products for an insatiable market in nearby cities. Accordingly Captain Sam Farve from Mobile, AL built a sawmill on the Jourdan River in this time frame. In addition New Orleans entrepreneur François Haas built a second sawmill on Bayou Talla in the Kiln shortly after the Civil War. A third sawmill in the Kiln was established by Emilio Cue, who became the community's first postmaster in 1887.

Father Loui Bateaux established the “Three Rivers Parish” in 1847 which served a three hundred person Catholic community in the Kiln. To support the parishioners, workers in these very early industries and their families built a small chapel in 1860. However, Father Bateaux did find it necessary to travel by horseback to say an occasional mass to his scattered flock. Moreover in 1870 a Catholic school opened.

In this era shipyards were necessary to service boats such as the many schooners carrying freight and passengers for these several businesses in Kiln. Hence Willie Curet, another pioneer, built such a shipyard in Kiln on the Jourdan River. Likewise Jeremiah Haas built another shipyard on Bayou Talla. In 1897 Albert J. McLeod and his wife Virginia, affectionately known as Aunt Gin, moved from South Carolina to the Kiln. In addition they established a large sawmill, stave mill, planer mill, turpentine plant, and a general mer-



Edward Hines Yellow Pine Lumber Company
Kiln, MS

photo c. 1915

chandise store in the area of present day County Road 419. In fact the McLeod family enterprises eventually employed over five hundred workers.

In 1886 the Annunciation Church was completed and dedicated. The First Baptist Church was built in 1897 and rebuilt in 1924. This area of the Kiln was the place many black workers lived, and this part of town was called Baptist Hill. Accordingly many skilled black workers found employment in the turpentine and timber industries as well as other professions. Strikingly there were eighty-nine African-American captains of schooners in Hancock County listed in Etienne W. Maxson's book *The Progress of the Races*. Prominent black family names included Wallace, Haynes, Hills, Frederick, James, Thompson, and Mitchell.

The railroads came to Hancock County in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Railroads transformed the timber and turpentine industries everywhere including in the Kiln. Specifically they opened up the piney forest of the more northern sections of the county for

much greater exploitation/logging. As a result significant migration of labor and capital from Georgia and South Carolina occurred at this time. In particular this labor force arrived with trainloads of highly skilled African American timber and turpentine workers enticed by the burgeoning job market available in the county.

The timber industry was a great boon for the local farmers who were some of the early settlers in the Kiln area. Originally, early small scale yeoman farmers/herders were scattered in the back country who practiced subsistence farming. Later more small farmers popped up all around sites of timber harvest with farmers looking to earn money selling farm products to the loggers. In reality loggers needed trained oxen, mules, horses, animal feed, and food for their many workers and were glad to pay handsomely for these farm products. Therefore by 1900, the Kiln had become a busy port site with multiple flourishing, codependent industries. Indeed it was an important center of gravity for the economy of Hancock County at the turn of the twentieth century. Thus the population in Hancock

County increased from 4,239 people in 1870 to 11,866 by 1900.

The Era of Large Sawmills extended from 1890 to 1932. Emilio Cue sold his sawmill in 1906 to Herlihy and Haas who owned the one on Bayou Talla. In 1909 W. W. Carre and Co. bought out Herlihy and Haas. But it was the tycoon Edward Hines, who bought out W. W. Carre and who significantly transformed the local timber industry. In any case he built the largest sawmill in the county at the Kiln on the Jordan River. Likewise Hines also bought considerable tracts of southern yellow pine forest in south Mississippi. Consequently the town of Kiln experienced dramatic growth with the establishment of the Edward Hines Lumber Company. As an illustration two hundred additional millhouses were constructed for the new workers added to the work force. A few of these millhouses are still present on Main Street (present day West River Road) although they are now much enlarged and renovated compared to their original design. The town was now large enough to have separate neigh-

borhoods known as Vicksburg, Bayou Coco, Morgan Town, Jourdan Bluff (Garden District), Rocky Hill, Fenton, and, as previously mentioned, Baptist Hill.

By 1913 the Kiln was the busiest commercial center between Hattiesburg and New Orleans. The center of gravity of the port was the Edward Hines Lumber Company situated on the north shore of the Jordan River, down river from Bayou Talla (See map.) The present day West River Road was Main Street of old town Kiln. As one walked north from the mill on Main Street, he approached the large commissary building where all workers were expected to shop. Next door was Eddie Farve's Drug Store. Down the street was the movie house. Further down the street on the right was the house of the mill superintendent and Joe Roddie's house. Across the street at this point was the hospital. Further down Main Street one could turn left to attend the Annunciation Church. In this neighborhood one could shop at the John Ulysses Grocery Store and spend the night at the hotel next door. Nearby on the Kiln-Delisle Road was a slaughterhouse where beef and pork were dressed

for local consumption. The meat was sold at Cure's grocery store further west on this road. Attached to the store was the post office.

The Kiln was a strategic commercial port for schooner traffic for passengers and freight to and from New Orleans and Mobile. It was also on the east/west Kiln-Delisle Road and the Kiln-Picayune Road. By the way, there was no good road between Bay St. Louis and the Kiln. There was no bridge in the Kiln over the Jourdan River in this era, only a small ferry barge at Pauline's Landing. In fact the Kiln Road (Highway 603) was not built until the twentieth century. Hines used a railroad "dummy line" to transport some of his lumber products and passengers to Lumberton, MS. From Lumberton a connection could be made to the Southern Railroad line or a local north/south railroad route to Gulfport. In addition interconnecting short dummy lines were built into the many active timber sites, making transport of large logs more efficient. However, passenger travel between Bay St. Louis and Kiln had to be accomplished mainly by boat for many years.

Edward Hines died of pneumonia in 1931. By this time all of

the virgin pine trees in the county had been cut. The Great Sawmill Era ended when the mill closed in 1930 and most of the workers moved away. Accordingly the Hines family moved their operation to the Pacific Northwest. Sadly the Kiln dwindled into a small village again during the Great Depression, eventually becoming a virtual ghost town.

In summary, the history of "The Kiln" during the Pioneer and Great Sawmill Eras was a story of boom and bust. This town was a busy port on the beautiful Jourdan River that during the nineteenth century enjoyed busy schooner traffic transporting timber products and passengers to and from New Orleans and Mobile. The introduction of railroads transformed the timber industry in the Kiln and the rest of the country. However after all of the virgin pine timber was cut, the Edward Hines Lumber Company closed its mill, and most of the workers and their families moved away. In a forthcoming article the history of the resurgence of the economy of "The Kiln" after the Great Depression in the twentieth century will be presented.

SOURCES:

- Coleman, Eddie. "A Brief History of the Kiln." *The Historian of Hancock County*, March 2008.
- Ellis, Dan. *Kiln Kountry*. Privately published by the author. Vertical file, Hancock County Historical Society.
- Haas, Norton. "History of Kiln Community." Vertical file, Hancock County Historical Society.
- Howard, Joan Porbes. "Early Kiln." *The Historian of Hancock County*, Nov., 1995.
- Ladner, J. Larry. Personal Interview. June 17, 2019.
- Scharff, Robert S. *Louisiana's Loss, Mississippi's Gain*. Lawrenceville, VA: Brunswick Publishing Co.



The Kiln Hotel was owned by the Jourdan River Lumber Company. Later the name of the hotel changed with the owner of the lumber company.



This was the commissary and drug store for the lumber mill in the town of Kiln. It was located near the mill on the Jourdan River.



Through various owners and names—Emilio Cue, Herlihy and Haas, W. W. Carrio, Edward Hines—the Jourdan River Lumber Company was a staple in the Kiln.

ANNUAL CEMETERY TOUR

Even though October is still a few months away, it's not too early to begin thinking about and planning the Cemetery Tour. The 25th Annual Cemetery Tour will be held on Halloween night, Thursday, October 31, 2019. Needed are volunteers to prepare the cemetery for the tour, to portray citizens buried there, and to act as guides. To volunteer, please call 228-467-4090. All actors and guides must be members of the Historical Society.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WE HAVE RETURNED TO OUR ORIGINAL DAY OF PRESENTING THE CEMETERY TOUR: HALLOWEEN NIGHT.

NEW MEMBERS

Tom and Rachel Hogue
Bay St. Louis, MS

Harriet Koerner
Bay St. Louis, MS

Erin and Kyle Saucier
New Orleans, LA

Mack and Rochelle Saucier
Covington, LA



"An Astonishing Tribute to Resilience"



335 Coleman Avenue Waveland MS
228 467-9012

No Admission Charge - Donations Accepted
HOURS: 10 am to 3:00 pm
Tuesday through Saturday

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



SENIOR CAMP
A dystopian novel about life in the not so distant future in New Orleans.
Can Mimi and her best friend, Lula, survive the "camp" that promises fabulous prizes, but instead gives rise to horror and threatens their very survival?


Available at Bay Books, Amazon, Kindle, bookstores



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

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

Blank advertisement space.

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



418 Highway 90
Waveland MS
39576



Bay Cottages

Historic Bay St. Louis Ms.
Vacation Rental

305 Main

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

228-466-4793

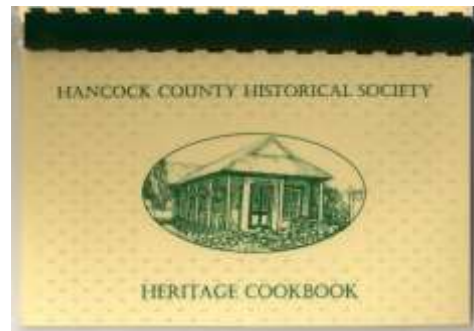
HUBBARD'S WAVELAND HARDWARE

" IF YOU DONT THINK WE HAVE IT, ASK US!!"

DAVID & RICHARD HUBBARD

615 NICHOLSON AVE
WAVELAND, MS 39576

PHONE: (228)467-4494 FAX: (228)467-7632



\$20

(For mail orders please add \$7 for postage.)

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



Kristen E. Thwait, CSR
President
SouthGroup Insurance
-Gulf Coast

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 \$ _____