

THE

HISTORIAN

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

www.hancockcountyhistoricalsociety.com

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

October 2020

NEWS FROM LOBRANO HOUSE

The Kate Lobrano House has reopened for members and visitors, and the hours remain the same: Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m. until noon and 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m., closing from 12:00 –1:00 for lunch.

Monthly luncheons have been postponed until further notice, but we look forward to their return as soon as we feel we can do so without affecting the health of our members.

ATTENTION:

Our board of directors is looking for volunteers among the membership with intelligence technology (IT) and/or accounting/bookkeeping skills.

In addition, *The Historian* welcomes articles for publication, pictures, history, or stories regarding Hancock County.

ANNUAL CEMETERY TOUR

The 26th Annual Cemetery Tour has been postponed indefinitely. It is hoped that a cemetery tour will be possible in the spring of 2021. An announcement will be placed in a future edition of *The Historian* when the date of the tour is known.



Cedar Rest Cemetery
Bay St. Louis, Mississippi

A Stroll through Cedar Rest Cemetery

By
Beverly Frater

A cemetery can have many stories to tell, and those stories are a chapter in the history book of the community in which the cemetery is located. Cedar Rest is no exception. Not all of the life stories are known about those who rest there, but much is known about many thanks to the hard work of HCHS volunteers in the 1980's and 90's. The stories that Cedar Rest tells range from accounts of the distinguished to the heroic to the tragic to the curious and even to the notorious.

The 2418 known burial sites represent the variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the people who shaped our area.

Some graves are of people who were born in Hancock County, but many are not. Different parts of the United States are represented as are many foreign countries. These countries include France, England, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Germany, Greece, Switzerland, Denmark, Montenegro, Chile, Cuba, and Canada. Some of the headstones bear inscriptions in native languages.

Within the walls of Cedar Rest lie Bay St. Louis mayors Gaston Gabriel Gardebled, John Victor Toulme, and Robert Warner Toulme (John's son, who also once served as Police Chief and was the proprietor of the Crescent Hotel). Congressman Eaton J. Bowers, Jr., was elected in 1904 and is the only known resident of Cedar Rest to have served in Washington. Other esteemed citizens include Hancock County sheriffs Charles Chadwick and Sylvan Ladner, Jr., assessors and tax collectors Elihu Carver and John B. Ioor,

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Charles Gray, Executive Director

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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
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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.”

postmaster Archibald R. Hart, postmistress Ella Ioor, and city treasurer and justice of the peace Alcide Ladner. Upon retirement, Mr. Ladner was caretaker of Cedar Rest Cemetery.



Eaton Jackson Bowers

Distinguished doctors Dr. Roger de Montluzin, Dr. Cyrus Shipp, Dr. Ludwig H. Von Gohren and Dr. James A. Henderson are buried in Cedar Rest. Originally from Louisiana, Dr. de Montluzin was a prominent physician and surgeon who served as President of the Board of Health of Bay St. Louis. Dr. Shipp, born in 1880, was first a railroad man before attending medical school. He was an authority on malaria and mosquito control. Dr. Von Gohren was a native of Strausberg, Germany. In the latter part of the 19th century, his estate



Dr. Roger de Montluzin



Dr. James A. Henderson

“Villa Quisiana” was a health resort offering mineral baths. Drs. Shipp and Von Gohren also served on the Board of Health. Dr. Henderson’s headstone bears a copper insert of a horse and buggy which is a reminder of early doctor home visits.

Cedar Rest is the final resting place for several notable business owners and operators. R.R. Perkins was highly successful at the turn of the 20th century. He was President and Manager of the Imperial Naval Stores and President of Merchants Bank.

John Osoinach owned the Bay Mercantile. Incurring great debt, he constructed an opera house above his business on the beach road. Sadly the building burned in



John Osoinach

1907, one year after the opera house opening. The fire was huge, destroying several major buildings in Bay St. Louis.

W. A. McDonald (later W. A. McDonald and Son) was a fixture in the Bay for most of the 20th



W. A. McDonald

century. The business started as a feed store, but grew into a bustling lumber enterprise. At one point it was the largest retail business in Bay St. Louis with thirty-five to forty employees. Mr. McDonald was also a real estate developer.



M. E. Ansley

In the early 1900's, M. E. Ansley sold "fancy" groceries in his store, products not found in the typical markets. About the same time, Andrew Manieri owned a restaurant located at Washington Avenue and the beach road. Behind it was a training center for prize fighters. His son Russell was a champion



Andrew Manieri

boxer. At the time, Bay St. Louis was a popular boxing hub. Referred to as the "Ice Cream Man," Andrew also had an ice cream wagon that traveled the streets of the Bay every summer for thirty-five years.

Known as "Mr. Polite," Hypolite A. Perre (b. 1852) owned the Crescent Bakery on Main St. in Bay St. Louis. Without missing a day, for over fifty years he left his home at 3:00 a.m. each morning and made trips to Waveland to deliver mail, messages and goods.

Other respected citizens who are buried in Cedar Rest include Louise Crawford, who founded the Hancock Library System at the request of the Works Progress Administration; Abigail Chadwick Bourgeois and Katrina Overall McDonald, civic leaders who devoted much of their lives to community service; and Inez Labat, educator and historian who donated her books and research to the Hancock County Historical Society.

The railroad played a dominant role in the development of



Charles Marshall

Hancock County. Charles Marshall worked for the railroad for fifty-three years, eventually as a local superintendent. His mission was to beautify the grounds surrounding the coast depots in the belief that it was important for the cities to make good first impressions on arriving passengers. During his funeral in 1928, nearby passing trains tolled their bells.

Maritime and seafood commerce were also important to development of our county. A. P. Boardman from Leominster, MA came to Hancock County in the mid-1800's. He and his son William T. owned and commanded steamers along the Gulf Coast.



A. P. Boardman

At the turn of the century, Harry Joseph Thurston owned a successful turtle cannery in the Bay called the Thurston Turtle Soup Factory. Today the Bay-Waveland Yacht Club sits on that spot. Henry died of the Spanish Flu in 1920 at age thirty-nine, and the factory closed. Djuro Radulovic, a ship's captain, was born in 1810 in Montenegro. His tombstone is inscribed in Syrilic.

The lumber business was a bustling industry in Hancock County from the mid 1800's into the early 20th century. George Arbo owned a mill as did Conrad Sick, who lived at 640 N. Beach Blvd in the Bay and had a lumber mill on his property. Wilson Victor Cuevas was an important logger who



Djuro Radulovic

moved his yield by mules and oxen to the railroads for shipping to the mills in the county.

Newspapers are vital to any thriving community. Ben Lane Posey owned and operated the *Bay St. Louis Republican* in the mid-1800's. John Korcinsky Lawrence Dambrino, who in 1909 at age three arrived in Hancock County aboard an "orphan train" from New York City, first worked for the *Sea Coast Echo*. He then started his own successful newspaper, the *Hancock County Eagle*. Archibald R. Hart from Gainesville, AL,



John Korcinsky Lawrence Dambrino

owned and published the *Gulfcoast Progress* newspaper for thirty years in the first half of the 20th century.

Several prominent contractors in Hancock County are buried in Cedar Rest. Gaston Gabriel Gardebled built many of the public buildings in Bay St. Louis, includ-



Joseph Labat

ing City Hall. Joseph "Papa Joe" Labat, who was born in the Bay in 1868, built many of the churches and grand homes in the area.

Charles Sanger was a diversified contractor. He built several public buildings, schools, businesses and homes in the Bay and in Waveland. He could perhaps be named the "Father of the Seawall." He built his first "breakwater front" on the beach in 1892 and continued building seawalls until 1920. He also drilled artesian wells, dug holes



Elihu Carver

for telephone poles and restrung the lines after storms.

Cedar Rest is the final resting place of many veterans. Elihu Carver was born in Connecticut, but came south to fight in the War of 1812. Captain Ben Lane Posey fought in the Mexican War as a member of the Carolina Palmetto Regiment and later fought with the 38th Alabama Infantry in the Civil War. Also serving in that war were Henry Carco, Captain Hector McKenzie Graham, Lott M. Sones and several others. Joseph "Pepe" Carrio was to serve in the Civil War, but an accident to his hand prevented him from joining the Confederate forces. Instead he spent the war evaporating sea water to make salt for the soldiers. Benjamin N. Deblieux served in the Civil War with a troop out of Louisiana. He was an attorney and later became a judge. Major Charles Chad-



Modena R. Weston

wick fought on the Union side. His sister Modena Chadwick Weston was a Union Army nurse and is the only woman veteran buried in Cedar Rest. Oscar Dahlberg and others served in the Spanish- American War.



Oscar Dahlberg

Seymour Carrio died in 1918 while serving in France in WWI. However, he did not die from war wounds, but rather from meningitis. Born in the Bay, Edwin (Ed) William Vairin was a sailor in WWII. He returned home after the war and became a policeman. Shortly after the U. S. entered World War I, Oswald Gilbert, a native of Bay St. Louis, enlisted in



Oswald Gilbert

the US Army. He was assigned to Troop 1, 9th Cavalry, known as "Buffalo Soldiers," African American men who served their country. He died in 1957. 2nd Lt. Henry Buckley Chapman was a flight instructor and has the distinction of



Henry B. Chapman

being the only one known to train pilots in both world wars. Many more veterans from the War of 1812 through the Vietnam War call Cedar Rest their final homes.

Although not buried in Cedar Rest, mention should be made of Henry Jetton Tudury, Mississippi's most decorated soldier of World War I. The Tudury family, originally from Spain, owned many properties in the Bay area. His parents are buried in Cedar Rest.

Stories of those who depart life before their time are especially tragic. According to Lillian Poillion's Aunt Lorena, little Lillian, age five, perished in 1929 after eating too many green apples. In 1932, Jack Whitfield, eight years old, and his father Horace drowned in a Henderson Point bayou which had been recently dredged. Jack fell off the bridge crossing the bay-



For one who departed life before it could be lived

ou, and his father tried to save him to no avail. At age twenty, Curtis Whitfield Ladner was killed by a passenger train in Bay St. Louis in 1937. Powhattan Robertson was of Native American descent. The inscription on his headstone tells that he died "October, 1820 in the bloom of youth." A dog statue rests atop the small headstone of Marie Ella Toulme, who was eleven months old when she passed away in 1887.



Lawrence Stepney

One of the more touching life stories is that of Lawrence Stepney. Born in New Orleans in 1878, his parents had been slaves. He never attended school. When he was about fifty, he moved to Mississippi and worked in Kiln making moonshine. Unfortunately much of his pay was in kind. He developed a drinking problem and in 1935 was sent to Magee, MS, to the Mississippi Tuberculosis Sanatorium where he rehabilitated. In 1941, he met Horace Kergosien, the new sheriff of Hancock County, who took Lawrence back to the family home in Bay St. Louis. The Kergosiens employed him, built him a home on Carroll Street, and when he died at age ninety, they buried him. Today he lies near the Kergosien family.

Moonshine did play a part in one unfortunate death in 1917. After overindulging, former Hancock County Road Commissioner David Dow Posey was confronted by Deputy Sheriff Oscar Favre. Not heeding the warnings to stop

his rowdy behavior, the deputy shot and killed Posey.

Cedar Rest has its share of the unique and the curious, too. Born in Ft. Worth, TX, in 1924, Ginger Burke Paradise was a gypsy queen. Gypsy tradition requires that graves of their dead remain unknown, so her exact burial spot is not marked. Two vaults in the cemetery are unmarked and remain unused. One belongs to the Poillion family. Mr. Poillion built it for his wife, but decided to bury her elsewhere. The other crypt was built for Mrs. Harriett Jordan. Her brother, Douglas Williams, the first black police chief of Bay St. Louis, did know that she owned the crypt and had her buried next to her son a few plots over. Wilhemina Weber Moon's grave appears to be in Cedar Rest, but it is actually in property just adjacent. Joan Newman Seal donated that parcel of land to the Baptist Church, and Wilhemina was



Wilhemina Weber Moon

buried there. The property was sold to W. A. McDonald in 1925, and the McDonald family respects the graves which were originally a part of the Baptist Church property.

As a testament to a slower-paced world, a horse watering trough is positioned in a central spot in the cemetery. Once referred to in the *Sea Coast Gazette* as "the bathtub," it originally sat in front of the old City Hall on Second Street. Nearby in a large plot rests Mayor John V. Toulme with his three wives and some of his children.



Large families were not uncommon in days gone by. Joseph and Leonora Labat had thirteen chil-



dren. The seven daughters all graduated from college—quite an accomplishment for women in the early



1900's. Antonia and Clara Cova-cevich Grandich had nine daughters and no sons!

In the cemetery are two "angel" trees. Following Hurricane Katrina, craftsmen came to the Gulf Coast and using chainsaws carved dead oak trees into works of art. Cedar Rest is fortunate to have two of these trees.

There are several unique grave sites. R.R. Perkins' head-



R. R. Perkins

stone, the largest in the cemetery, weighs 1700 pounds. It was carried by rail from New Orleans, unloaded at tracks near the cemetery and pulled on skids by eight mules to its spot.

The grave of Canadian George Arbo, who owned the Arbo Saw Mill Company, is marked with the only chiseled wood marker in the cemetery.



George Arbo

Throughout Cedar Rest are headstones with the emblem which signifies the graves of members of the Woodmen of the World. WOW, founded in 1890, is a

“fraternal benefit society” which still today provides insurance to its members and support to the community. Built in 1909, the large building adjacent to Cedar Rest on the north served as the WOW meeting hall. Now known as Century Hall, it houses a collection of specialty shops.



William Soldinie

The distinctive headstone of Ellen Gray (b. 1855) tells that she was a member of the Woodman Circle. Nearby is the grave of Cora



Ellen Gray



Gray (b. 1884). Were they mother and daughter?

Memberships in other fraternal organizations are indicated on some gravestones. The Masonic



Matt Simmons

emblem can be found throughout the cemetery. The graves of Eugene and Mat Simmons are marked with the emblem indicating that they were members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. The inscription on letter carrier William Melvin Bing's stone reads "Father...Postman-Poet-Member Branch 33, N.A.L.C"

Perhaps the most curious tale is that of the Phantom Barber, William Dolan, who in the 1940's was accused of entering homes in Pascagoula in the dark of night and cutting locks from little girls' hair. The body buried in the unmarked grave in Cedar Rest was found tied to a creosote piling floating in the Mississippi River. Family identified the body as Dolan, and he was buried. However, later, it was determined that the fingerprints of the body did not match those of Dolan. So who is in the grave?

Two last graves of note are those of Kate and Frank Lobrano. Frank was successful



Katherine and Frank Lobrano

in the oyster cultivation business in Louisiana, and he and Kate divided their time between Bay St. Louis and Louisiana. HCHS headquarters bear the name “Kate Lobrano House.” Kate lived in the house for a few years. Her descendants donated the house to the our society, and we shall be forever grateful.

As time goes on, Cedar Rest may tell more stories. On our HCHS website hancockcountyhistoricalsociety.com, you can find a list of known burials. Findagrave.com affords an extensive virtual tour, as many of the documented graves have been photographed and recorded there. For an in-person tour, the Historical Society invites you to visit Cedar Rest for a stroll through this chapter in Hancock County history.



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

We have prepared a series of articles about our Board of Directors and Staff. We hope you enjoy their interesting recollections of how they got here.

Nicolette Murphy Secretary



Nicolette Murphy

My name is Nicolette Maria Murphy. I was born on March 25, 1987, in Slidell, LA. I am the middle child of Tina (Morreali) and Ken Murphy. I have lived in Hancock County for thirty years (since I was two years old).

My family has owned Dan B's Bar and Restaurant my entire life. I was practically born into the food and beverage industry.

In 2004 I received my high school diploma. I worked at Bay St. Louis Waffle House for a few years throughout high school. Shortly after, Hurricane Katrina shattered our lives in 2005.

On March 26, 2007 I gave birth to my oldest child, Zayne. Before the year was over, I had started working for the Silver Slipper Casi-

no. On December 11, 2008 I had my middle child, Jeremy. Finally, on October 22, 2010, I had my last child, Penny, all very healthy babies.

During this time (2005) we were blessed with our niece Lexie and nephew Tyler.

Life took another drastic turn when I noticed Jeremy missing certain milestones. After rigorous testing, he was diagnosed with autism. I took a couple of years off work to be a stay-at-home mom, which is one of the hardest jobs in the world.

I have always worked with my father, photographer Ken Murphy. He has successfully published five coffee table books. I still actively work with Ken now doing real estate photography, pounding the pavement with the most recent book *Local Spirit*, and countless other projects.

As a woman of the coast, I enjoy hunting and fishing during my time off. This is a way of life for my entire family. My children are always active in sports, and the Bay-Waveland School District has been amazing to my family my entire life.

I am a member of the South Mississippi Wounded Warrior chapter and American Legion Post 139.

I have been blessed to be a citizen of Hancock County, and I look forward to serving the Historical Society to learn, grow, and build our community and to remember who we are, how far we have come, and where we are going.

Dr. James Codling Historian

James (Jim) Codling was born in Canada. He taught school in grades K-12 and worked for the National Park Service and had missions in Manitoba and Quebec. He came to the United States in 1978 for graduate study in St. Louis where he met his wife, taught, and pastored Olive Branch Church. He and his family moved to Mississippi in 1988 where he and his wife were house parents at



Jim Codling

Palmer Home for Children in Columbus, MS. He taught history at Mary Holmes College in West Point, MS, and Education and Religion at Mississippi State University. He also pastored churches in Sumterville, Alabama, and Ackerman, Mississippi. He and his wife retired to Bay St. Louis in 2015. His hobbies include gardening, walking, and wood working. His daughter, Mattie, is the director of collections and exhibits at the Walter Anderson Museum in Ocean Springs, MS, and his son teaches theater at Lafayette High School in Oxford, MS.

Dr. Codling holds a Ed. D from Mississippi State University with social studies emphasis and a Th. D in Religion from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO with historical theology emphasis.

Jim has been involved in historical preservation in Starkville and was on the committee to have the Nash Street subdivision put on the National Registry of Historic places. He was the presenter to the state commission. He has attended and presented at conferences in history and teaching history and has a fellowship at Concordia doing historical research. He has also been on his church's review of Presbytery Records Committee.

Among Dr. Codling's scholarly publications are *Calvin: Ethics, Education and Eschatology*, *Forgotten Foundations of Education* and a chapter in *The New Deal and Public Policy* which deals with Mississip-

pi's recovery in the depression. While at MSU he was part of a research team that published a number of articles on film and STEM education.

Dr. Codling has been an important member of the Hancock County Historical Society and member of its board of directors. Unfortunately for us Jim has accepted a position as assistant pastor at Grace P.C.A. in Baton Rouge and must resign his position as Historian for the Society. We are very fortunate that he and his wife Chris will remain residents of Bay St. Louis and members of the Historical Society.



It is time to elect board members to serve from January 2021 through December 2022. Final selections will be made in elections in November. Further information on how to vote will be published in the November newsletter.

Our nominating committee will submit its recommendations in the November newsletter, but we are also asking the general membership for nominations. If you would like to serve or to recommend someone, please call 467-4090 or send an email to hancockcountyhis@bellsouth.net no later than **October 31, 2020**. The offices being filled this year are first vice president, treasurer, secretary, and historian.

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