

THE

HISTORIAN

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

www.hancockcountyhistoricalsociety.com

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

November 2021

COMING EVENTS AT LOBRANO HOUSE

The monthly luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, November 18, 2021, at noon at the Kate Lobrano House. The speaker will be Jay Heitzman who will speak on his time working at the Star, the A&G, and the drive in theaters in Hancock County. **Reservations are required** and may be made by calling 228-467-4090. **Please call by noon on Wednesday, November 17,** 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. **Served at noon, lunch is \$14.00 for members and \$15.00 for nonmembers,** payable at the door. The catering order is submitted on Wednesday morning prior to the luncheon on Thursday. If you need to cancel your reservation, please call by 2 p.m. on Tuesday prior to the luncheon if at all possible so that the society does not incur unnecessary expenses. It is catered by Almost Home Catering, Michelle Nichols, chef. The lunch menu is hamburger steak in red gravy, mashed potatoes, broccoli salad, yeast rolls, and pecan praline bread pudding.



Cedar Rest Cemetery
200 South Second Street
Bay St. Louis, Mississippi

THE 26TH ANNUAL CEMETERY TOUR

By
James Keating, M.D.

A cemetery is not only a repository of gravesites containing the remains of buried, or otherwise interred, dead people, but also a treasure trove of local history. The Cedar Rest Cemetery was created or became the property of the town of Bay St. Louis in 1860. The original

tract of land was a donation of Jacques Baptiste Toulme, who was an early town leader as mayor, successful merchant, landowner, and entrepreneur.

A second addition of land was acquired by a swap between St. Luke's Episcopal Church and the city in 1888. A third acquisition in 1891 was a gift to the city by Joan Newman Seal. There are 2,418 known burial sites embedded with rich genealogical data or statistics that contain many stories to tell which are important contributions to the history of Hancock



THE
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OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Eddie Coleman, Editor
James Keating, Publisher
Charles Gray, Executive Director

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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**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.”

County.

The word cemetery is derived from a Greek word for “sleeping place.” Gravesite funerals are ‘rites of passage’ for the ‘sleeping’ corpses. Some folks believe that the ghosts of these people buried at Cedar Rest Cemetery still reside in this hallowed ground and come out of their tombs or graves at night, certainly on “All Hallows’ Eve” or Halloween.

The Hancock County Historical Society offered to the public the 26th Annual Cemetery Tour on Saturday, October 30, 2021, at the Cedar Rest Cemetery in Bay St. Louis. The fun began at 5:00 PM and continued until 7:00 PM. On the tour several long term residents of the cemetery appeared and spoke of their lives to visitors, young and old. Admission to the tour was free, but donations were gra-

ciously accepted. Afterwards guests were welcomed to the Lobrano House for punch, hot dogs, cookies, and other treats.

In order of appearance, the night’s guest citizens who spoke of their lives were Katherine Lobrano, Ludvic Herman Von Gohren, Ardell Ealy Cuevas, Robert Webb, Emma Mary Whittaker Nicolson Ulman, Judge Benjamin M. Sones, Lucy Jebens Sanger, and Charles Marshall

**KATHERINE M.
LOBRANO
(1871—1921)**
(Portrayed by Kathy Terrell)

I am Katherine M. Lobrano, fondly called Kate, and I was born on January 3, 1871, to Rebecca Jane Douglas, formerly of Charleston, South Car-

PRESIDENT’S CORNER

Veterans Day each year brings back a poignant memory of an older black man sitting on his back stoop in full army uniform from WWII. As he displayed his patriotism, he also showed pride in his service to our country. I imagine he was also reliving some very important moments in his life and some very important times in our nation as well.

BOARD NOMINEES

I am pleased to announce that the nominating committee has put forth three individuals to serve on our board, Michelle Breisacher, Ron Thorp, and Lea Young. The general membership will affirm these appointments at our Thursday, November 18th meeting.

Enjoy a happy Thanksgiving.

Chris Roth
President





Katherine Lobrano, portrayed by Kathy Terrell, takes a break after welcoming the first group of visitors to the 26th year of the Cemetery Tour sponsored by the Hancock County Historical Society

**LUDVIC HERMAN VON
GOHREN
(1844-1906)
(Portrayed by Jim Codling)**

I am Dr. Ludvic Herman Von Gohren. Mine is the only underground crypt in this graveyard. The door to the crypt is on top of the ground and it slides to open—this way. The crypt will hold six to eight caskets. My wife, Caroline, my daughter, Paula, and I are buried here. And recently the ashes of one of my descendants was put here.

I was born in Saxony, Germany. I came to Bay St. Louis and built a health resort on the beach which I named Villa Quisiana. It consisted of several well built and ventilated houses finely furnished with tennis and croquet courts. Invalid and convalescent patients came, but I also accepted people from all parts of the country with health problems. I specialized in hydro



Jim Codling

olina, and George W. Maynard, a Confederate War Veteran formerly of St. Louis, Missouri. At the time of my birth, my father was the Town Marshal of Bay St. Louis.

On August 4, 1891, I married Frank J. Lobrano, a direct descendant of Jacinto Lobrano, a captain of Jean Lafitte's famous privateer navy. My husband was the founder and developer of the process of using empty oyster shells to cultivate oysters domestically in the bay bottom in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana.

After our marriage Frank and I made Bay St. Louis our home and began our family which produced five children. With the help of my father, Frank purchased our family residence on the corner of Main and Cue Streets on October 1, 1892. Later that month on October 15, Frank sold the property in its entirety to me.

My husband maintained his official domicile in Plaquemines Parish in Louisiana and was elected Clerk of Court there. So he and I maintained residences here and in Pointe a la Hache, LA. He also served as Justice of the Peace in Plaquemines Parish.

In December 1917, I was stricken with skin cancer, and we made a decision to sell the Bay St. Louis property. Instead of selling the entire plot, I decided to sell just the section fronting Main St. and keep the back section with a smaller house on it for my mother. After my death various family members lived in the house, but it was vacant for several years before my grandchildren gave it to the Historical Society to use as its headquarters.



and electro therapeutic treatments, and anti-fat and water cures.

Bay St. Louis developed as the finest health resort on the Gulf Coast. The climate is ideal, the Gulf breezes are pure, the pine trees are fragrant and clear, and the fresh water is good for drinking, while the salt water is ideal for swimming, boating, and fishing. In addition vegetables and fruit are in abundance. What else is necessary for good health? I was the famous doctor who could give my patients the best of care and rest.

My home was a bee hive of community social affairs. The *Sea Coast Echo* social columns were full of my family's "agonies and comings" as well as the names of out-of-town people who were my patients.

I was a city councilman and an alderman for the Twelfth Ward under Mayor E.E. O'Brien. My name is on the corner stone of the old City Hall. My youngest daughter married Walter Gex, Sr., and is buried over there. Paula married a Jenks and is buried here. My third daughter's son, Ernest Dalamain, is buried over there.

We were one of the elite beach families in this health resort town in the late 1800's to early 1900's. I lived from 1844 to 1906—fifty-six years. Bay St. Louis was a wonderful home to me, and I loved living here.

ARDELL EALY

CUEVAS

(1879-1966)

(Portrayed by Lori Massey)

I am Ardell Ealy of Long Beach. I was born September 5, 1879. I am of strong Indian de-



Lori Massey

scent. I married Wilson Victor Cuevas, who was born in Hancock County on July 31, 1871. We had three sons and one daughter. If you are from Hancock County, you know that there are many Cuevases!

Wilson was a logger. The Cuevas family worked in the timber industry along the coast, primarily in Hancock County. They cut down trees and moved them by mule and oxen to the railroads which were throughout the county to be shipped to the mills. Our family and the others lived in "mobile homes"—the men would clear a section of timber and move our homes on skids to the next area of cutting.

Wilson's father was James A. Cuevas, who was born on Cat Island on February 28, 1838. As a Confederate veteran, he was known as the "Sage of Beauvoir." He lived there in his

later years. He had become blind, but his mind was good. He could remember the names of the owners of all of the houses from Lakeshore to Long Beach.

Wilson's grandfather, Raymond Cuevas, was born on Cat Island in 1812. He was the youngest of eleven children and moved from Cat Island to Shieldsboro (Bay St. Louis) in 1849. They lived on Beach Boulevard, then called Shell Road, just west of St. Stanislaus.

Wilson's great-grandfather was Juan Cuevas, who was born in 1762 in the state of Malaga Province of Andalusia, Spain. He married Marie Helena Ladner, the daughter of Christian Ladner. When he died in 1849, he was buried on Cat Island and later moved to the Biloxi Cemetery. Juan fought in the War of 1812. It is said that for his support to General Andrew Jackson he received Cat Island as a grant from the President of the United States.

Wilson died in Waveland on December 16, 1939. I saw lots of changes in this world because I lived to the ripe old age of eighty-seven and died on October 21, 1966. Wilson and I are buried nearby.

ROBERT W. WEBB

(1872-1925)

(Portrayed by Eddie Coleman)

I am Robert W. Webb, considered one of the most accomplished mayors of Bay St. Louis, serving almost four consecutive terms before my death.

Although I was a native of Georgia, I had been a resident of Bay St. Louis for twenty years when I died of a cerebral hemorrhage. Prior to my death, I had



Eddie Coleman

been a traveling salesman working for a New Orleans wholesale house with the Mississippi Gulf Coast as my territory. My first venture into politics was serving over ten years as Alderman of Ward 3. During this time I was instrumental in building a school in Ward 3. For my efforts, the school was named for me. The building had two floors with the classrooms upstairs and the cafeteria downstairs. Originally there were two teachers for six grades, but when it closed there were two teachers for four grades. For a short time in the mid-1980s, it served as a meeting place for the Hancock County Historical Society.

While I served as Mayor of Bay St. Louis, I tried in vain to get the board of supervisors to pass a bond issue to construct a seawall along Beach Boulevard to protect it and adjacent lands from erosion especially by storms. However, the board

turned down my request. Not to be outdone, I went to the open market and sold the bonds myself. Because the sale was a success, the seawall was built, and I have since been called the “father of the seawall.”

Realizing the fast growth of the city of Bay St. Louis, I visualized the need for a city owned waterworks system rather than a privately owned one. Thus, at my suggestion and with the concurrence of the city aldermen, the city of Bay St. Louis bought the existing privately owned waterworks from Charles Sanger for \$92,000.

I died May 30, 1925, at age fifty-three during my fourth term as mayor. A street in Bay St. Louis has been named in my honor.

**EMMA MARY WHITTAKER
NICHOLSON ULMAN
(1812-1895)
(Portrayed by
Candee Canady)**

Hello, I am Emma Mary Whittaker Nicholson Ulman and was born in London in 1812. My first husband, John H. Nicholson, died in 1870. I then married Alfred Augustus Ulman. Tonight I am going to tell you about Alfred.

Alfred’s parents were James A. and Ellen McDonald Ulman. He was born in New Orleans in 1846. If you recall, I was born in 1812. I will let you do the math!

Some say Alfred served in the Confederate Army as a teenager. Following the war, he was “an apprentice in a machine shop and became an expert in the trade.”



Candee Canady

In 1873, Alfred moved to Waveland and bought one thousand acres which became known as Ulmanville. This land was on Nicholson Avenue northeast of the railroad tracks. There he built a large woolen mill which was capitalized at \$50,000. As an indication of its success, Jeff Davis Avenue was opened for housing for the mill workers and the company store was the only significant store in Waveland at the time. Until his death, the mill was extremely successful making blankets and shawls and was known for “its superb workmanship and for merchandise of long-lasting, superior quality.” A black and white large block pattern was especially popular.

Alfred served as alderman. Then he successfully ran for mayor and was re-elected two times. He was credited with much of Waveland’s prosperity and growth at the time. Coinci-

dentally, his father, James A. Ulman, was Mayor of Bay St. Louis.

Alfred owned a large cannon and enjoyed firing it on special occasions. The concussion would rock our little town. That cannon was part of Bay St. Louis lore. During the War of 1812, British ships, headed for New Orleans, were seen rounding Henderson Point and turning into the Bay of St. Louis. The loaded cannon was positioned on a high point, but the soldiers abandoned their post. A woman visiting from New Orleans took the cigarette from a man nearby and lit the cannon. The British, thinking that Bay St. Louis was well fortified, continued on.

While in his third term as Mayor, Alfred died on June 24, 1893, at the age of forty-seven. The *Sea Coast Echo* reported, "Waveland mourns the loss of one of her foremost and enterprising citizens, in the death of



Ron Thorp

Mayor Ulman. All wharf flags were half-masted Sunday, and much sorrow prevailed in the city."

I died two years later in 1895 at the age of eighty-three. Alfred and my first husband, John Nicholson, rest here with me in this beautiful tomb.

**JUDGE
BENJAMIN M. SONES
(early 1800's-??)
(Portrayed by Ron Thorp)**

My name is Judge Benjamin M. Sones. In 1875, the town of Shieldsboro had grown large enough to be reclassified as a city, and its name was changed to Bay St. Louis. I was elected the first mayor of the newly renamed city. I had also served as judge and postmaster in 1865.

I lived on Toulme St. with my wife Rebecca and our son Lott. Lott was a member of the 3rd Mississippi Infantry, a Confederate States of America regiment formed to defend the Mississippi Gulf Coast during the War of Northern Aggression. He became a 2nd Lieutenant of the Shieldsboro Rifles.

My son was killed in a battle fought in Franklin, Tennessee, on November 30, 1864. He was buried by his comrades in an unmarked grave near the battle site. In 1866 Col. John McGavock of Franklin, Tennessee, took great pains to identify the remains of these fallen soldiers, and he oversaw the reinternment of the Confederate dead.

Upon hearing this news, I traveled by wagon to Franklin to reclaim my son's remains and bring him home to be honored and buried in Cedar Rest. This Confederate battle flag I am holding

became the property of the Historical Society 140 years later in a ceremony hosted by the Sons of the Confederate Veterans.

**LUCY JEBENS SANGER
(1856-1935)
(Portrayed by Rebecca Riebe)**

Hello, I am Lucy Jebens Sanger. I was born in Pass Christian in 1856. I would like to tell you about my husband, Charles Sanger, who was very smart, talented, and industrious.

Charles and I married in 1878 and had two children, a daughter and a son. Our home "Mulberry Cottage" was lost in the great fire in 1894 which destroyed several structures on the beach road near the railroad tracks. Fortunately we were insured.

Charles was born in Wiesbaden, Germany, in 1853.



Rebecca Riebe

He learned carpentry at a young age. After arriving in Hancock County (uncertain of the date), he embarked on an outstanding career of building some of the most distinguished homes and public buildings in the area. Among them were St. Stanislaus (twice burned by fire), St. Joseph Academy, Merchants Bank, Bay St. Louis City Hall, and St. Clare's Chapel in Waveland. His plans for the original courthouse of 1874 were used, but he did not win the construction contract. He also built eight of the most beautiful homes on Beach Blvd., then called Shell Road. Of all of those mentioned, the only one still standing is City Hall, now known as the "Old City Hall" on Second Street. Sadly all others have been lost to fire, hurricanes, or decline.

Charles was also a drilling contractor for artesian wells. He often drilled the well for a house before he built it. He drilled the one for our house in one week—354 feet deep! It had a flow of 150 gallons a minute. He sold the water to our neighbors at the rate of \$10 a year for the first faucet and \$2.50 a year for each faucet thereafter. He called his business the Bay St. Louis Water Works. He sold his water system to the City of Bay St. Louis in 1922.

Since he was in the digging business, Charles dug holes for telephone poles, too. After storms he often restrung lines for the Cumberland Telephone Company in Bay St. Louis.

After building his first "break water front" for Dr. Logan on the beach in 1892, Charles was contracted to build them for several beach homes. In 1920 he designed and was



Jim Keating

contracted to build a ten foot high sea wall with steps from Cedar Point to Ulman Avenue and one from Carroll Avenue to the Osoinach Store near the tracks which held no steps. Charles also owned a dry ice factory on Bookter Street in the Bay which he sold in 1928.

Charles died on February 20, 1935. I had died three years earlier on May 6, 1932. We spend eternity here together. In his time, Charles made a large mark on our community.

**CHARLES MARSHALL
(1848-1928)
(Portrayed by James Keating)**

I am Charles Marshall, railroad man, who put in fifty-three years working on railroads, thirty-one of them as Superintendent of the New Orleans-Mobile district of Louisville and Nashville Railroad.

My first job was on the Nashville Decatur Railroad in Tennessee, where I was born in 1848. I worked in various places in Tennessee as an operator, agent, and dispatcher until 1881 when I was transferred to New Orleans as a freight agent.

By 1886, I was Superintendent of the New Orleans-Mobile Division, and in 1893 I moved to Bay St. Louis, where I lived until my death in 1928, commuting to work in New Orleans on the fast Coast Train.

I was married to Lillian Willis in 1881 at Clarksville, TN. We had four sons, Gilbert, Carl, Donald, and Geoffrey. Carl is buried there next to my wife and me.

During my burial here in Cedar Rest, a train at the L&N Depot tolled its bell, and another train, passing on the tracks over there, did the same. I felt very honored.

I was very active in city affairs. I was on the board of directors of the Hancock County Bank and a member of the Bay St. Louis Sea Wall and Bond Commission. I was also a member of the Presbyterian Church and the Masonic Lodge.

I've been told that twenty-six of my letters to Brother Joseph Dutton in Illinois can be found in the Historical Society file. Some of you might find them interesting reading for a rainy day.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHY IS THE STATUE IN TERCENTENARY PARK OF JEAN BAPTISTE LE MOYNE, SIEUR DE BIENVILLE INSTEAD OF D'IBERVILLE?

By Charles Gray
(Reprinted from the speech Charles gave on August 25, 1999 at the dedication of Tercentenary Park)
 Currently edited by Eddie Coleman

On August 25, 1297, Louis IX of France was canonized for leading both the First and Second Crusades into the Holy Land, thus establishing the Feast Day of Saint Louis.

Four hundred and two years later, on August 25, 1699, a small party of French explorers led

by Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville entered and explored a “beautiful bay” that he named the Bay of Saint Louis.

And now, three hundred years (the date of the dedication ceremony) after that historic happening, we will celebrate the event by dedicating a life-size bronze statue of M. Bienville and by opening Tercentenary Park. The statue has been sculptured by Mary Ott Davidson, who was graduated from Biloxi Catholic schools and Dominican College in New Orleans. She became a nun, and during her training as a nun, she was introduced to photography, paint, and sculpture. She taught in the inner city while working on a graduate degree in art from Tulane University. She then accepted a position teaching in Zurich, Switzerland.

After returning to the United States, she received a second graduate degree from Vermont College of Norwich University before becoming the head of the art department at the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Jeff

Davis campus.

She sculptured Bienville’s older brother, Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur de Iberville for the city of Biloxi. It was he who ordered the construction of Fort Maurepas at old Biloxi before he returned to France in May 1699. The statue stands near the Biloxi Lighthouse.

We felt it was appropriate to honor the younger Le Moyne brother, Bienville, who remained on the Gulf Coast for the better part of forty-six years. Bienville, after all, founded the cities of Bay Saint Louis, Mobile, “New” Biloxi, and New Orleans.

After work was started on the Bienville statue, Mary agreed to sculpture a crest for the city of Bay Saint Louis as well as bas relief replicas of *Le Marin* and *La Badine*, Iberville’s and Bienville’s ships respectively. These three pieces will adorn the columns at the entrance to Tercentenary Park.

★ ★ ★

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THANK YOUS**

The Hancock County Historical Society wishes to express special gratitude to Jim Macphaille for underwriting the cost of the hot dogs and other refreshments and to Kentwood Water for its donation of bottled water. Thank you, Mr. Macphaille and Kentwood Water for your generous support!



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