

THE

HISTORIAN

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

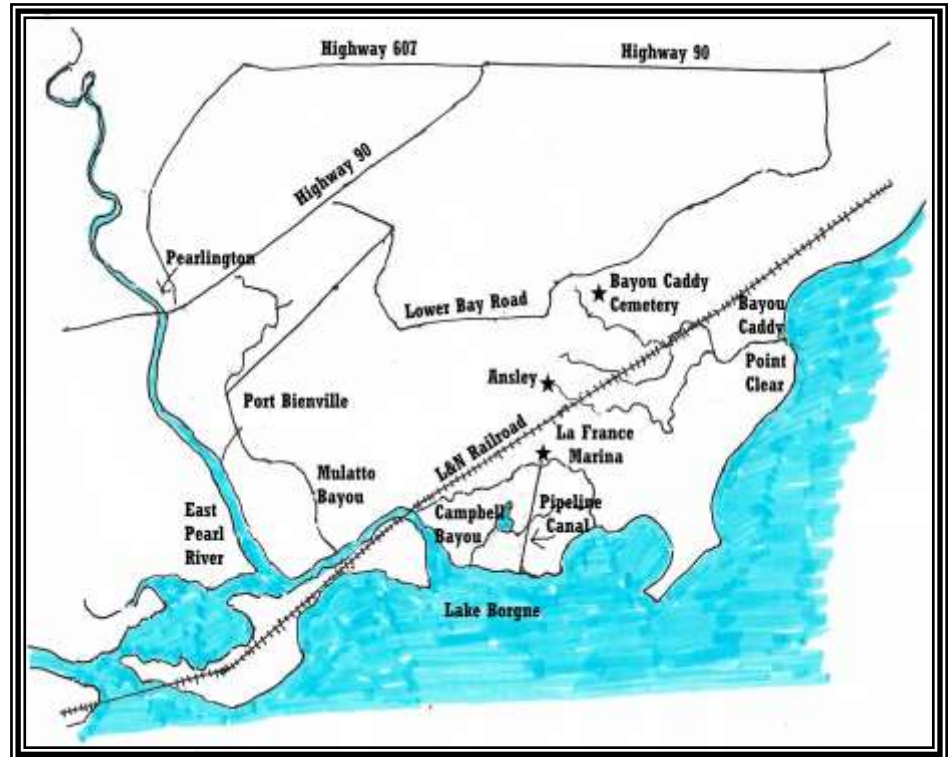
www.hancockcountyhistoricalsociety.com

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

April 2022

COMING EVENTS AT LOBRANO HOUSE

The monthly luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, April 21 at noon at the Kate Lobrano House. The speaker will be Jim Codling, Historian and Parliamentarian of the Historical Society, who will speak on Hancock County during World War II. **Reservations are required** and may be made by calling 228-467-4090. **Please call by noon on Wednesday, April 20,** 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 ham and asparagus frittata, shrimp and grits, marinated vegetable salad, croissant, and fruit torte cake.



ANSLEY

By
James Keating, MD
Edited by
Virginia Olander

The town and neighborhood of Ansley is in southwest Hancock County and has a rich history that spans over two hundred years. The map of Ansley demonstrates landmarks such as bayous, the fishing village, the original Louisville and Nashville Railroad line, the Lower Bay Road, and the Pearl River, features which may not be familiar to those who do not live there. The first family of Ansley, the LaFon-

taine's, have played a key role in this history over the years and can boast of Ansley's earliest French/Choctaw settlers. The railroad transformed the economy of Ansley and the rest of Hancock County after it was built in 1872. Fishing camps have been common in this coastal region for many generations. The Baldwin Lodge that was built by a prominent New Orleans businessman is one such camp worth including in this local history.

The name *Ansley* designates a small town which is principally a fishing village next to Campbell Bayou and the L&N railroad tracks. The surrounding neighborhood which extends from the industrial park to Lakeshore Drive is also called Ansley by the locals. The railroad line runs through the town, hug-

THE
HISTORIAN

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

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

Published monthly by the
**HANCOCK COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chris Roth, President
Beverly Frater, Treasurer
Georgie Morton, Secretary
Lea Young, Director of Communications
James Keating, Publicity Chairman
Jim Codling, Historian and Parliamentarian
Ron Thorp, Chairman of the House Committee
Bryan Frater, Membership & Fund Raising
Michelle Breisacher
Virginia Olander

MAILING ADDRESS:

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

PHYSICAL ADDRESS:

108 Cue Street
Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi 39520

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.”

ging the high ground next to the vast marsh along the coast of Lake Borgne. In fact, these wetlands are included in the Hancock County Coastal Marsh Preserve. Bayou Caddy extends from the interior of the town of Ansley and flows due east to empty into the Lakeshore neighborhood at the site of the Silver Slipper Casino. The historic main byway crossing east/west in the general area of Ansley is the Lower Bay Road. The territory north of Lower Bay Road, and south of Highway 90, is high ground which was acquired early during the nineteenth century by old families, such as the Zengerling’s, because it was excellent piney forest suitable for farming and raising cattle.

The first settler of Ansley was the son-in-law of Simon Favre, Jean Cadet LaFontaine (1790-1852). LaFontaine fought in the Battle of New Orleans with Andrew Jackson and was awarded a compensation for his part in the battle by being given “bounty land” in the southwest corner of Hancock County. Shortly thereafter, he sailed up a bayou several miles searching that land grant territory until it became too shallow for his schooner. Here he built a house on adjacent high

ground. This bayou is known today as Bayou Caddy, but the tributary he ascended went west several miles to the location that is now the town of Ansley. Of interest is the name *Bayou Caddy*, which is an informal corruption of his name *Cadet* which translated from the French means “youngest son.” He is buried next to his home in the Bayou Caddy Catholic Cemetery in Ansley at the end of Bud Ladner Road. His many descendants have lived in the neighborhood over the last two hundred years. His mother and his wife, both named Celeste, were Choctaw. He and Celeste married in 1821 and reared eight children. The LaFontaine Family still owns land in the area and has played an important role in the history of Ansley.

In the recent past, Ernest “Bully” Ladner was the caretaker of the Bayou Caddy Catholic Cemetery. He was the son of Bud Ladner, and they lived next to the cemetery in the twentieth century. The historian, Russell Guerin, recently visited the cemetery and reports an interesting anecdote regarding Bully’s ancestor, Jean Cadet LaFontaine. Apparently, several years ago, Bully disinterred the remains

President’s Corner

Bay Saint Louis was privileged recently to host the Vietnam Memorial Wall traveling exhibit. There were those of us who experienced the Vietnam era firsthand, and for other generations it is history to be learned. One of our own members, Ron Throp, recently was a featured speaker at the opening ceremony. Ron served in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot and was on active duty for five years. He retired from the reserves as a Lt. Colonel.

This was an especially poignant moment for Ron as he placed flowers at the Vietnam Wall to honor the eight helicopter pilots of his 82-man flight class that were killed in Vietnam. Thank you for your service, Ron, and my God bless the families and friends of those who did not return.

“To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child”. Cicero

Chris Roth
President

of Jean for purposes of establishing a more permanent brick tomb with a better marker which visitors may view. Bully was a big man, over six feet tall. Yet, he was surprised how large the skull and femur of Jean was, much bigger than his own. Bully suspected that Jean might have been as tall as seven feet.

The Bayou Caddy Catholic Cemetery in Ansley has been described as “a quaint, well-manicured cemetery.” Near the original house that Jean built in the early nineteenth century, the original land, comprising 4.3 acres, was a gift from Jean LaFontaine’s wife to the church in 1852. Their son, Raymond LaFontaine, donated one acre of land nearby for a church, which was “a picturesque little white church,” named St. Anne’s Mission. Unfortunately, the church was destroyed by a hurricane. Many LaFontaine descendants are buried in this cemetery. Other family names are noted on tombstones such as Ladner, Favre, LaFrance, Dorn, Garcia, Bosarge, Necaie, Schwartz, and Zengerling.

Ansley was originally a small town that grew up next to a railroad depot named after M. M. Ansley, an important L&N Railroad Maintenance Superintendent in the late nineteenth century. South of this small community is an old fishing village on a navigable waterway, Campbell’s Bayou. Across from this Bayou, embedded in the coastal marsh wetland, is a linear stand of pine and acorn trees on relatively high ground that is a veritable “island.” The first white settlers to this island were the Campbell Clan. Charles Campbell (1837-1904) and Jessie Gordon Campbell (1849-1904) were some of the first generation to live there. Later, his nephew, Robert Campbell, and his niece, Tattie, also immigrated from Scotland and maintained a family cemetery on the island. Six generations are there (See photo.), and the last Campbell to live on Campbell



This photo shows the tomb of Jean Cadet LaFontaine in the Bayou Caddy Catholic Cemetery in Ansley. A historic marker has been placed in front of the tomb commemorating his service in the War of 1812.

Island, Miss Edna Campbell, was buried there in the 1960s. These pioneers lived a hardscrabble, subsistence existence surviving by fishing, trapping, hunting, and raising livestock such as hogs, chickens, and cows surrounded by the marsh.

The seasonal mosquitoes affected a miserable existence when present for man and beast. These pioneer settlers had no commercial insect repellent, so the mothers of children wrapped newspaper around a child’s lower legs and underneath the child’s knee pants and stockings. Sleeping under a fine net was common for everyone on the Gulf Coast. The windows had shutters, but no screens, and air conditioning was a thing of the future. A homemade insect repellent used at night was dry cow manure. If placed in a bucket and allowed to burn slowly, smoke was generated that drove the insects out of the bedroom. Someone said, “They can’t stand the smoke.”

Fortunately, the smoke had no odor for humans and was effective.

The name Campbell Island persists even today, and a pond nearby is called Campbell Lagoon. The bayou west of this little fishing village is known by the local fishermen as “Inside Campbell Bayou” which empties into the East Pearl River. In addition, the bayou east of the fishing village is called “Outside Campbell Bayou” which empties into Heron Bay. A pipeline canal intersects the Outside Campbell Bayou which is the preferred waterway to go directly to Lake Bourne and some of the best fishing grounds in the world. The pipeline is part of the Kinder Morgan Inc. natural gas and petroleum network that feeds their big storage depot on Lower Bay Road.

The introduction of railroads to the Gulf Coast provided Hancock County citizens and

businesses the opportunity for local and long-distance travel. In Hancock County, there were several depots: Bay St. Louis, Waveland (x 2), Clermont Harbor, Lakeshore, Ansley, Claiborne, and Baldwin Lodge. Another stop was English Lookout right across the East Pearl River in Louisiana from the Baldwin Lodge. At English Lookout, there was a post office and the Dunbar Seafood Cannery after 1915. Passengers and cargo detrained at English Lookout and caught the small packet steam-driven boat up the river to Pearlington, Logtown, and Gainesville. Hancock Bank sent one of its officers everyday by this connection to its branch in Logtown. The L&N Railroad embraced its role in providing back and forth commuter service all day to these small towns like Ansley in the county which promoted growth of population and prosperity. In Ansley, there was a post office, an elementary school, a church, and a tavern. A Weston Lumber Mill railroad spur connected Logtown with the L&N line at Ansley, presumably for transport of freight such as lumber products.

At the turn of the twentieth century, there was a plethora of fishing camps/clubs along the marshes of the Gulf Coast. In that era, the L&N Railroad stopped, if requested, at fishing camps in the Lake Catherine and East Pearl River areas. Some fishing camps had names such as the Rigolets Club, Tally-Ho Club, Pine Island Club, We-Go-Fishing Club, and the Baldwin Lodge.

Albert Baldwin (1834-1912) was a prominent New Orleans businessman who built a lodge or clubhouse in 1892 on the east end of the L&N bridge across the East Pearl River. Although Baldwin was a migrant from Massachusetts to New Orleans, he married well in 1862 to Arthemise Boulogny (1846-1911). The Baldwins had six children. Mr. Baldwin had financial interests in several businesses in-

cluding banking. Moreover, he was a generous philanthropist. The Baldwins entertained lavishly. Mr. Baldwin was a member of the Boston Club and the King of Carnival in New Orleans one year. This high society couple entertained General U.S. Grant once at the Baldwin Lodge.

Baldwin died suddenly at his lodge in 1912. He was discovered by a servant, but although physicians and nurses were summoned, he never regained consciousness, presumably having suffered a massive stroke. Ironically, the day preceding his death, Baldwin was in good spirits and felt well. After he died in 1912, the lodge remained in the family. Specifically, in 1922 it was transferred to his daughter, Alice Baldwin Vairin. The lodge was destroyed completely in the Hurricane of 1947, but the pool and some walkways remained.

In conclusion, the early history of the neighborhood and town of Ansley records the struggle of the hearty pioneers that settled the area to eke out an existence in this vast coastal marshland. These wetlands were replete with abundant fish, seafood, game, and mosquitoes. Jean LaFontaine and his wife Celeste are the ancestors of many descendants in Ansley today. The railroad was an important factor in the growth and prosperity of the several towns along its path. The story of the Baldwin Lodge reveals the attraction of the neighborhood to the New Orleans sportsmen looking to hunt and fish. In a forthcoming companion article, the history of Ansley after 1940 will be presented which will highlight the famous LaFrance Marina and a short biography of "Poss" LaFrance.

SOURCES:

- Guerin, Russel B. "Albert Baldwin." *Vertical File*, Hancock County Historical Society, Bay St. Louis, MS.
- Guerin, Russel B. "Campbell." *Vertical File*, Hancock County His-



Albert Baldwin



Arthemise Boulogny Baldwin

- torical Society, Bay St. Louis, MS.
- Guerin, Russell B. *Early Hancock County*. Denver: Outskirts Press Inc., 2014.
- Ladner, Jr., Jimmie. Personal Interview. January 24, 2022.
- Scharff, Robert G. *Louisiana's Loss, Mississippi's Gain*. Lawrenceville, VA: Brunswick Publishing Corp., 1994.

Editor's note: For more information on Albert Baldwin, check the May 2015 newsletter on our website.

Spring



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

MARGARET AND AL SARRAT

Margaret and Al were born and reared in Louisiana, Margaret in Eunice and Lafayette, Al in New Orleans. Their families both relocated to Bay St. Louis when they were high school freshmen. Margaret was a member of the last graduating class of St. Joseph Academy and Al graduated from St. Stanislaus. They met on a double date with friends and started dating when Margaret was a senior at SJA and Al was a freshman at USM. Margaret attended USM and graduated from Soule Business College. She worked as an executive secretary at First National Bank of Commerce in New Orleans. Margaret and Al married in August of 1969 at Our Lady of the Gulf Church. The next day Hurricane Camille hit and Bay St. Louis was devastated. They enjoyed the first week of their honeymoon without running water or electricity but with fresh tetanus vaccinations. Things had to get better.

Eighteen months later, Al headed to USAF officer training while Margaret remained in BSL and gave birth to their first child, a

daughter. They then headed to Texas where Al was attending pilot training and started their journey as an Air Force family. Through many moves and adventures, two more children arrived, a son and another daughter. As an Air Force pilot, Al was often away and Margaret stayed busy as a full time military wife and mom. She volunteered with numerous organizations during their many assignments and was also a yoga instructor. With thirty years of service, Al retired from active duty as a colonel and remained in Georgia as a civilian program manager for the Air Force Reserve.

After being away for forty years, but always intending to return, Margaret and Al bought a condominium in the Bay and after a few years traded it for a house. They currently split their time between Georgia and Bay St. Louis. Their children are happily married with 2 children each. They currently live in Atlanta, Knoxville, and Boston. The children and six grandchildren enjoy visiting and love their time in Bay St. Louis. Margaret and Al started volunteering with the Historical Society about six years ago to assist their dear friend Georgie. They have regularly helped man the society and have been loyal participants in many projects during that time. Margaret and Georgie are usually at the society

on Mondays, so stop by and say "Hello."

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

By
Eddie Coleman

This is less of a "frequently asked question" and more of a "did you know." I've found a couple of photos of long ago grocery stores which stood on Nicholson Ave. in Waveland that readers might find of interest. Two of them are shown below.



The photo comes from the *Sea Coast Echo*, dated July 28, 1966, and was owned by William Ruhr from 1902 until his death in 1930. After his death, it was operated by his son, August Ruhr, until it burned several years later. The information the Society has says that it stood at 320 Nicholson Ave.



The only identification the Historical Society has is that the store was located on Nicholson Ave. If someone has more information, please call the society at 228-467-4090.



"WHAT FLOATS YOUR CARDBOARD BOAT" RACE

In conjunction with Pirates Day in the Bay

Build a Boat and Join the Fun!

(Construction facility and cardboard available)

Saturday, May 21, 2022

9 am - noon

Bay St. Louis Municipal Harbor Beachfront
(Foot of De Montluzin Street)

For the benefit of the

Hancock County Historical Society

For Information::

Chris Roth 228-323-1105

Rules, Construction Tips, Registration

<https://hancock39520.wixsite.com/my-site>



NEW MEMBERS

Rhonda Aime Gamble
Waveland, MS

Tom & Joal Stone
Waveland, MS

John Hainkel
New Orleans, LA

Kay Stroehman
Bay St. Louis, MS

Dennis Manson
Gulfport, MS

IN MEMORY OF

GEORGE SAUCIER
FORMER HCHS PRESIDENT

JOHN "BOA" OLANDER
DEVOTED VOLUNTEER

ZACH BUTTERWORTH
HESSE & BUTTERWORTH, PLLC
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

P. O Box 3567
Bay Saint Louis, MS

PH. (228) 255-7500
FAX (228) 255-9009

Licensed in LA & MS

BSL

"A Place Apart"

Robert and Samantha Mc Raney



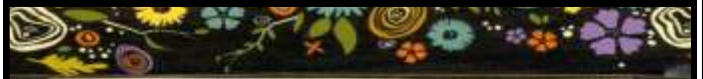
TUES - SAT
10 AM - 5PM
211 Main St. Bay St. Louis, MS

BEACH TENTS & TOWELS

COOLERS & DRINKWARE

OUTDOOR GAMES & APPAREL

FLIPFLOPS AND SUNSCREEN



Old Town Bay St. Louis
112 S. Second Street
Bay St. Louis, MS

**The Shops of
Century Hall**

The Shops of Century Hall is a collection of unique shops in a Marketplace setting all under one roof in an historic building. You can find whatever you need, and there is spacious parking on site.

We are housed in an amazing building built in 1909. You can find original art, jewelry, gifts, home decor, antiques, and just about anything else you could think of. One stop shopping at it's best!

Phone 504 858 8574

www.shopscenturyhall.com



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
2035

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?

LL LEE

Available at Bay Books, Amazon, Kindle, bookstores
[Amazon.com/author/lllee](https://www.amazon.com/author/lllee)

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.

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 601-798-0202

Est. 1949

www.fordrity.com



KATY AIME
 REALTOR ASSOCIATE BROKER


C: (228) 342-4012
 O: (228) 466-6643

www.HLRAYMONDPROPERTIES.COM

Michael Reeves - Architect
 AIA, LEED AP BD+C, CSI CDT, NCARB

Architect Licensed in MS, LA, AL, FL, KY
 Member International Code Council

Michael Reeves Architects, PLLC
 Email: mreeves.architect@gmail.com
 Phone: (228) 493-2513




HL RAYMOND
 PROPERTIES

529 ULMAN AVENUE
 BAY ST LOUIS, MS 39520
 228.342.4012 CELL
 228.466.6643 OFFICE
 228.466.6536 FAX
 WWW.HLRAYMONDPROPERTIES.COM

f t p in

REAL ESTATE SALES & RENTALS
 SINCE 1928 - CELEBRATING 90 YEARS!



418 HWY 90 - WAVELAND- 228-467-5454
WWW.ASHMAN-MOLLERE.COM



Bay Cottages
 Historic Bay St. Louis, MS
 Vacation Rental

305 MAIN STREET
 www.vacationbaywaveland.com
 228-216-1155

**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

**Mayley's
 PestControl, LLC**



your local answer to what's
 bugging you 

Cell: 228-380-0755 **David Mayley**
 Ofc: 228-380-0295 mayleys.pest.control@gmail.com
 Licensed • Bonded • Insured 603 Esplanade Ave.
Knowledgeable • Professional Bay St. Louis, MS 39520



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

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

Biloxi:
 2505 Pass Rd
 228-385-1177


Diamondhead:
 5400 Indian Hill
 228-467-2272



Kristen E. Thwait, CFP
 President
 SouthGroup Insurance
 Gulf Coast

**WAVELAND'S
 GROUND ZERO
 HURRICANE MUSEUM**

"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**

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
P. O. BOX 3356, BAY ST. LOUIS, MS 39521
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Online payment may be made at www.hancockcountyhistoricalsociety.com

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, AND ZIP _____

PHONE (_____) _____ EMAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

Founder Individual \$30____ Founder Family \$50____

Thomas Shields \$100 ____

Charles Gray Society \$250____

Life Time \$500____

DUES RENEW IN JANUARY OF EACH YEAR