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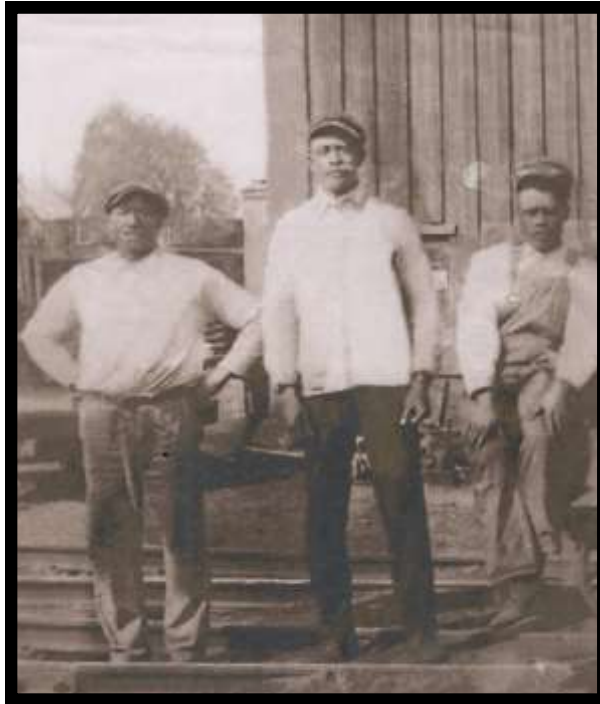
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Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

June 2022

COMING EVENTS AT LOBRANO HOUSE

The monthly luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, June 16, 2022, at noon at the Kate Lobrano House. The speaker will be Brian Labat who will speak on the history of the African American community and the Hundred Men Hall. **Reservations are required** and may be made by calling 228-467-4090. **Please call by noon on Wednesday, June 15,** 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 non-members,** 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 barbeque pork, baked macaroni, coleslaw, pecan pie cobbler, dinner rolls.



Joseph Carry, the middle man in the photograph, was a founding member of 100 Men Hall. In addition, he was a member of the committee on amending the By-Laws in 1925.

100 MEN HALL

By

Rachel Dangermond

Bay Saint Louis' iconic 100 Men Hall turns one hundred this year! One of the oldest surviving juke joints, existing African American landmarks, and rare standing buildings on the MS Blues Trail is celebrating its first hundred years this June 2022. The 3,500 square foot clapboard building is a treasure for the Gulf Coast region.

The Hall is a living legend. The first thing the audience

notices when a musician takes the stage is the liveness of the sound in here. This is the residue of an alchemy of joyous expression from the ancestors sprinkled with an equal dose of legendary Chitlin Circuit vibes. The wonder of this sound is encoded into the muscle memory of this old juke joint. Musicians who play the Hall often comment they hear the voices in the walls.

The Hall's millennial celebrations provide us with an opportunity to ask what is important in our history? How could we start a conversation about the past that is distinct from what has been told to us already? That is why the preservation of this historical landmark is important to tell future generations about an aspect of history that has



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Eddie Coleman, Editor
James Keating, Publisher

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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.”

long been obscured in history books—the story of Black self-reliance and self-determination in this Mississippi coastal town.

The organization that built the Hall, the Hundred Members Debating Benevolent Association (1894) came together out of dire circumstances. Here was a segregated community complete with Jim Crow laws, where African Americans were not welcome in white establishments and society at large. In order to care for their own community, twelve civic minded men formed a co-op to pay medical and burial expenses. Their civic participation gave rise to fellowship, and the 100 Men Hall was erected to safely house all life events that happened in the African American community.

And what a community it has been! Here in Bay Saint Louis, the Black community produced an amazing roster of famous Americans. One fine example is Richmond Barthé, sculptor associated with the Harlem Renaissance whose work portrays the diversity



and spirituality of man. James Carroll Booker, III, was a rhythm and blues keyboardist born in New Orleans but raised in Bay Saint Louis by his aunt on Ballantine Street. An icon among piano players, Booker’s unique style combined rhythm and blues with jazz standards. He is honored Labor Day weekend at the Hall’s fundraiser, Booker Fest, a three-day homage to Booker’s brilliance. Local artist, Ellsworth Collins, a musician who played guitar and stand-up bass at the Hall (which his grandfather,

President’s Corner

Our 2nd Annual “What Floats Your Cardboard Boat Race” was an overwhelming success. With 30 boats registered, beautiful weather and excited boat crews, we had four fun filled races. There were fast boats, slow boats, creatively decorated boats, and sinking boats, which all made for an exciting day on the water.

I’d like to thank and recognize our sponsors for their generous support:

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Stay tuned for information about the Old Spanish Trail Celebration and Re-dedication of “Battle of Saint Louis Bay” historical marker.

Chris Roth
President



The ladies in this photo were members of the Sheltering Rock Society. They are celebrating the 50 Year Anniversary of the organization in 1949. The 100 Men Hall was rented out to replenish the treasury (as stated in the By-Laws) and many events were held there.

John, helped found in 1888) was also a master woodworker, whose circus carvings have shown at the George Ohr Museum. Most of the historic homes built in and around Bay Saint Louis were by master builder and engineer, Joseph Labat, fondly known as “Papa Joe.”

There is an African proverb that says, “Until the lion tells its tale, history will always favor the hunter.” Mississippi history involves moments that are painful and uncomfortable to remember, but historic preservation of buildings such as the 100 Men Hall tell these stories in an expansive manner so that all voices are included in the narrative. The preservation of the 100 Men Hall encourages us to be aware of the history of all who contributed to the rich culture of Bay Saint Louis.

We are honored to usher the 100 Men Hall into the next one hundred years by celebrating over four themed weekends that highlight four distinct eras: Ancestors (June 17-19, 2022); Harlem Renais-

sance (February 2023); Chitlin Circuit (Fall 2022); and Rise of the DJ/Disco (June 17-19, 2023). This programming has been partially funded by the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area. Make sure you subscribe to the

email list at 100menhall.com to find out more about these fantastic weekends at the Hall. During the entire month of June 2022, the Hall is hosting *A Blues Chronicle*, a marionette workshop for children that will culminate in a performance chronicling each decade of the 100 Men Years of the 100 Men Hall (musician Jimbo Mathus and artist Dale Pohl will lead the workshop). The project is supported by the MEMBERS of Coast Electric through Operation Round Up and their Community Trust, in partnership with the Gulf Coast Community Foundation.

NAPOLEON

By

Eddie Coleman

The town of Napoleon was located a few miles north of Pearlinton and Logtown before the establishment of the Stennis Space Center in the early 1960s. Napoleon, Logtown, Gainesville, Santa Rosa, and Bayou La Croix became part of the Buffer Zone. These displaced residents where



100 Men Hall
303 Union St.
Bay St. Louis, MS.

the Space Center was built and whose ancestors had lived, worked, and raised crops and livestock were relocated to other parts of Hancock and Pearl River counties and across the Pearl River into Louisiana. Napoleon was settled by the French, and early settlers wanted to call it "Pearltown." However, a brother of Napoleon Bonaparte reportedly came to America to raise money and valuables to bail the Emperor out of exile. Authorities disagree on which brother—Jerome or Joseph. It would seem that Joseph is the likely one because he did visit the United States at one time, and Jerome did not. The first families who settled in the area were the Favres, Murphys, and Hovers.

Mr. Simon Favre, a Frenchman sent to the area from Mobile by the government, settled on a little farm in the area of Napoleon. His son, Captain Joseph A. Favre, was a founder of the Poitevant and Favre Lumber Company and the J. A. Favre Lumber Company. The Poitevant and Favre Lumber Company was the first lumber mill to employ African-American schooner captains. In 1908 the mill was destroyed by fire, and the family moved out of Napoleon.

More industry than timber was based in Napoleon. Many of the first families engaged in agriculture and stock raising. A brick yard was begun there, but it failed because the clay was not good enough to make brick. Of great importance

was the installation and use of the first printing press in Hancock County in Napoleon.

Two African-American schooner captains were stationed at Napoleon on the Pearl River in the early 20th century, Captain Willis Vaughn and Henry Willis. The name of their boat which carried wood and coal to New Orleans was *Vina*.

THE REST OF THE STORY...

A brother of Napoleon Bonaparte, probably Joseph, once camped on the banks of the Pearl River as part of a secret scheme to free his brother from prison on Saint Helena. After his surrender and banishment in 1814, a number of plots were afoot to rescue Napoleon. One called for moving him to New Orleans where locals were building a house for him. The truth is that the Napoleon House at 500 Chartres Street in the French Quarter was the home of Nicholas Girod, Mayor of New Orleans from 1812-1815. In fact, the mayor did offer to give the quarters to Napoleon; however, the ruler didn't escape Helena.

The story of Joseph in Hancock County, Mississippi, continues that he and a cadre of supporters left the coast of France on a cargo ship. With him Joseph was in possession of \$80,000 in gold coins to finance Napoleon's escape. To avoid losing

the money to pirates throughout the Gulf Coast, they made their way to the area of present-day Waveland where they were met by Jeremiah Henley. According to S. G. Thigpen, Mr. Henley was a French supporter who had aided France in its colonial disputes with Spain, and he had also served in Napoleon's army, surviving the Russian campaign.

Henley gave the men mules and other supplies for a trip to a hiding place along the Pearl River about one thousand feet from the edges of the water. As with many legends about money which speak of hidden gold coins, such occurs in this story. In order not to have any of his men sneak off with the money he had brought, Joseph had a plan. Late one night he buried the treasure chest so that none of his co-conspirators could sneak off with the gold coins.

On a dark, foggy, rainy night, Joseph and his men returned to New Orleans to find supporters who would give his brother a place to live once he escaped from Saint Helena. Unable to escape, Napoleon died in prison at age fifty-two in 1821. Jerome died in Florence, Italy, in 1844.

SOURCES:

Back, Edith. "Napoleon," *The Historian of Hancock County*, June 1996, Bay St. Louis, MS.

Keating, M.D., James. "Henleyfield/Byrd's Chapel," *The Historian of Hancock County*, June 2021, Bay St. Louis, MS.

"Napoleon." The Stennis Space Center History Office.



These are two views of the Napoleon cemetery.

“WHAT FLOATS YOUR CARDBOARD BOAT” RACE

The Hancock County Historical Society hosted its second annual Cardboard Boat Race in conjunction with Pirate’s Day in the Bay on Saturday, May 21, 2022. There were four races: Junior Individual, Junior Team, Adult Individual, and Adult Team. In addition to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in each division, the judges selected a Best in Division based on design and decoration of the boat. Because the “Best in Show” was in the adult team division, no “Best in Division was awarded there.

Junior Individual

- 1st: Madeline Chamberlain
- 2nd: Jack Whitney
- 3rd: Josie “JoJo” Tynes
- Best in Division: Blake Hansen

Junior Team

- 1st: Haddox and Alex Roth
- 2nd: Brady McCaw and Reese Cooper
- 3rd: Jimmy and Micah Chilimigras
- Best in Division: Marilyn and Alice Frater

Adult Individual

- 1st: John Chilimigras
- 2nd: Haleigh Dobson
- 3rd: Nicholas Lambeth
- Best in Division: Haleigh Dobson

Adult Team

- 1st: Ed Madden, Phil Meske, Tin Dangermond
- 2nd: Latter and Blum (Melissa Wilks, Philip Sutton)
- 3rd: Adam Heitzmann and Colin McDyer
- Best in Show: Greg Abner



Winner Junior Individual



Winner Junior Team



Winner Adult Individual



Best in Division USS Seahorse



Best in Division Swamp Monster



Best in Division Murky Waters



Winner Adult Team

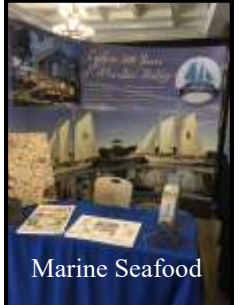
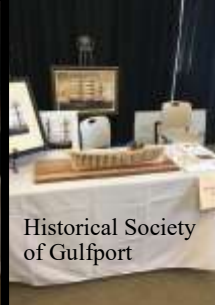


Best in Show Don't Panic



THE ANNUAL
MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL EXPOSITION

The City of Biloxi and Preserve Biloxi teamed up once again to present the Annual Mississippi Gulf Coast Historical and Cultural Exposition. It was held on Friday and Saturday, May 6 and 7 at the Biloxi Visitors Center at 1050 Beach Blvd. across from the Biloxi Lighthouse. Organizations participating with displays are listed below in order of appearance: Slavonian Auxiliary, the West End Hose Company Museum, the Mardi Gras Museum, Beauvoir, Keesler Air Force Base, Local History & Genealogical Dept. of Biloxi Public Library, Biloxi Historical Society, d' Iberville Historical Society, Lynn Meadows Discovery Center, Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area, Historical Society of Gulfport, Greek, Russian, & Ukrainian Culture, Maritime & Seafood Industry Museum, Sons of the American Revolution, Ocean Springs Historical Society, USM (Gulf Park School for Girls), Lapointe-Krebs House & Museum, Hancock County Historical Society, and Mississippi Aviation Heritage Museum. This year the Exposition was dedicated in memory of Charles Gray, Executive Director of the Hancock County Historical Society.



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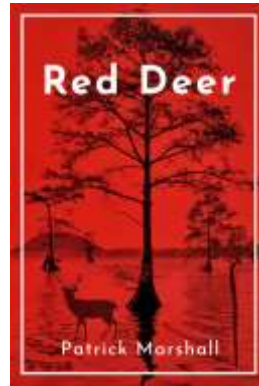
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