

THE

HISTORIAN



OF HANCOCK COUNTY

www.hancockcountyhistoricalsociety.com

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

February 2024

COMING EVENTS AT LOBRANO HOUSE

The monthly luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, February 22, 2024, at noon at the Kate Lobrano House. The guest speaker will be Mike Fitzwilliam who will speak on his new book *"Do You Know How These Places Got Their Names?"* **Reservations are required** and may be made by calling 228-467-4090. **Please call by noon on Wednesday, February 21**, to make your reservation. Seating is limited to forty-eight (48) people, and we need to order the correct number of lunches. **Served at noon, lunch is \$15.00 for members and \$17.00 for nonmembers**, payable at the door. The catering order is submitted on Wednesday at noon prior to the luncheon on Thursday. If you need to cancel your reservation, please call by noon on Wednesday prior to the luncheon if at all possible so that the society does not incur unnecessary expenses. It is catered by Almost Home Catering with Chef Michelle Nichols. The lunch menu is hamburger steak, garlic mashed potatoes, English pea salad, yeast rolls, and chocolate cupcakes.



This painting of Commodore John Rice Bell, Jr. hangs in the yacht club. He was instrumental in organizing the BWYC in 1949, and served as general contractor in building a new clubhouse at the site of the Old Peerless Oyster Cannery on the bay.

HISTORY OF THE BAY- WAVELAND YACHT CLUB (1949-1983)

By
James Keating, M.D.

After World War II the men and women who served their country returned to Hancock County and were surprised how much their home towns had grown and how much the economy had prospered. There was a spirit of optimism, and this generation wanted, among other things, to find recreation in sports such as sailing.

John Rice Bell, Jr., (1896-1979) met with a group of elders in the community in early 1949 and promoted the concept of organizing/building the Bay Wave-

land Yacht Club (BWYC). The Peerless Oyster Cannery had been destroyed during the Hurricane of 1947, and the peninsula on which it had stood, was an ideal location for a new yacht club. It was also determined that most of the sailing by the club's sailors would be on the Bay of St. Louis rather than on the Mississippi Sound. That precluded big boats with deep hulls and set the stage for the BWYC sailors to become the world's best sailors in the smaller sport sailboats like the Viper 640 in the Twenty-first Century. The club opened in 1950 and maintained a fleet of six Fish Boats. In that time there was considerable local recreational sailing with six races every Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

Henry Buckley Chapman (1893-1968) was a sailor who belonged to the original BWYC from

THE HISTORIAN

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Eddie Coleman, Editor
James Keating, Publisher

Published monthly by the HANCOCK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Chris Roth, President
Beverly Frater, Treasurer
Georgie Morton, Secretary
James Keating, Publicity Chairman
Jim Codling, Historian and Parliamentarian
Ron Thorp, Chairman of the House Committee
Bryan Frater, Membership & Fund Raising
Bert Young, Audiovisual Tech
Candee Canady, Archivist

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 Pluim, Webmaster

LOBRANO HOUSE HOURS

MONDAY — FRIDAY
10:00AM — 3:00PM
WEDNESDAY—10:00AM—
5:00PM
CLOSED 12—1 (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 PRESER- VATION.”

1906-1915. His father, W. J. Chapman, owned and sailed a Cape Cod catboat named Virginia. Henry sailed all his life and made several significant contributions to the Gulf Coast sailing program such as starting the Mississippi Coast Yachting Association Championship which has been called the Chapman Regatta ever since. Henry was born at Hotel Dieu Hospital in New Orleans and was an Army pilot in World War I. He taught students how to fly planes in both World War I and World War II. Henry started the Chapman Air Service at the Shushan Airport at the lakefront in New Orleans.

Harry Gelpi Chapman (b. 1932) is the son of Alfred Wilson Chapman (1894-1934) and Juanita Gelpi (1902-1991). Alfred served in the Army in World War I. The Chapman Family emigrated from Liverpool, England. Sadly, Alfred died in 1938 when his son Harry was only two years old. As a boy Harry lived with his Gelpi grandparents at 1940 Upperline Street in New Orleans. Harry’s mother, Juanita, married Henry Chapman in 1947 who was Alfred’s brother. As a result, Henry was Harry’s uncle, step father, and godfather, and his nickname was “Pop.”

Harry was an engineer who worked for Boh Brothers Company

in New Orleans from 1956-1995. Harry met Ann Pfister in 1952 on a blind date. Ann worked at the New Orleans Traffic and Transportation Bureau as a secretary. Harry and Ann married in 1957 and bought a new house in a development off Veteran’s Highway in Metairie, LA called “New Metairie.” They had four children--Elizabeth (1957), Amy (1959), Peggy (1961), and Harry (1961). Consequently, Harry and Ann developed one of the most glorious sailing dynasties on the Gulf Coast.

Evie Sucola Gordon remembers that in the 1950’s sailors and their families would have lunch at the club after church. At 2:00 PM sharp, the informal races would commence. Everyone would gather under the club in their personalized deck chairs to socialize and watch the Lightnings and Fish Boats race. The social life of the BWYC was serious and often formal in that era. A Mardi Gras Ball was the highlight of the season. The ladies wore fancy dresses, and these gala events possessed much pomp and circumstance. Yacht clubs on the Gulf Coast were vital to the culture and community providing sailing, fishing, and swimming among other year-round entertainment.

During the 1950’s BWYC sailors were competing against other clubs in the Gulf

THE PRESIDENT’S CORNER

February 2024

It is with sadness that I report that we lost Dr. Bill Bradford, Waveland MS., on January 24, 2024. Bill was a pioneer in emergency room medicine in the early years of his medical practice and was influential in the establishment of emergency medicine as a specialty.

In addition to his contributions to the practice of medicine, Bill was a committed volunteer in several local organizations. One was the Hancock County Historical Society. Bill served as president of the Historical Society, and after his presidency he continued to support our mission. Bill will be missed by all who had the pleasure and good fortune to know him.

Chris Roth
President



The third BWYC clubhouse was constructed in 1949 on the Bay of Saint Louis.

Yachting Association (GYA). Notable competitors of that age were C.C. McDonald, Leo Seal, Jr., and Jack Gordon. By 1957, this team was winning individual races in the annual Lipton Competition. Meanwhile, the club was training a young generation of teenagers who would bring glory to the club in the 1960's. Judy Reeves started sailing at age eight at the BWYC. She sailed in her first women's Knost Regatta in 1958 in a Fish Boat. In the 1950's the yacht club had an open sailing program and people of all ages and capabilities were welcome to sail there. The sailing program was organized, and one could read the instructions and know what was needed to suit a person's aspirations, something such as local sailors or regattas similar to the Lipton.

The story of the BWYC is one about multigenerational families who loved to sail and passed on this passion to their descendants. The first three Commodores were John Rice Bell, Jr., Robert Camors, and Henry Buckley Chapman. They and an important collection of contemporary, ardent sailors perpetuated several glorious sailing dynasties over the next several years. The historic Breath Family has represented one of the pillars of the Bay Waveland society since the Nineteenth Century. Six generations of sailors with the last name Breath have supported the sport of sailing on the Gulf Coast. There is

also a tradition of boat-building craftsmanship in that family that goes back one hundred years. These seamen have been leaders in the yacht club and the community in general.

Charles "Chuck" Albert Breath III (1946-2016) married his high school sweetheart, Ellen Colson of Waveland, in 1968. They have two children, Chuck and Missy. An expert sailor by age fifteen, Chuck enlisted in the US Navy and served in the Viet Nam War maintaining river patrol boats in the Mekong Delta.

As a youngster, Basil Kennedy loved to hang around the clubhouse, and he became such a good student of the sport of sailing that by 1962 Harry Chapman felt that he and his friends were good enough to be recognized as "qualified A," which meant that he could take a Fish Boat out to sail without a more experienced sailor on board. This was unusual at age fourteen. In those days Basil sailed with Leo Seal, Jr., Carol Gordon, Don Chamberlain, Dean Taylor, and others. Basil graduated to the upper rank of sailor called "expert" at age fifteen. He married Marie Louise "Weezie" Kushner in 1971.

In the Gulf Yachting Association the most important regatta is the Lipton Challenge. This regatta is considered the Super Bowl of competitive racing on the Gulf Coast. Until 1963, the sailors of

BWYC were not good enough to take the coveted Victory Banner home to hang in the clubhouse bar. Their sailors had won individual races in the regatta, but never achieved the lowest score that won the whole event. In 1963, skippers Chuck Breath, Basil Kennedy, and Walter Chamberlain, with a crew of Dick Mestayer, won the Junior Lipton. Remarkably, these hot-shot sailors also entered the Senior Lipton race of 1963 and won that event as well. After years of training, the sailing program of the club had developed a remarkable team of racing sailors. BWYC had evolved into a formidable opponent of the other members of the GYA in sailing competition.

By 1969, the Fish Boat was fifty years old in design, and the young sailors wanted a faster sailboat that was made out of fiberglass instead of wood. The new sexy race boat was called the Flying Scot, and it had a retractable center board that made it more trailable for transport to distant towns for regattas. Yet, its most attractive new feature was the spinnaker sail that added to the jib and mainsail on downwind runs, giving these sport boats great speed in a blow.

In the 1970's a new generation of male and female BWYC sailors who had been going to Summer Sailing Camp and Junior Race in their youth, emerged as National Champions. Judy Reeves sailed in the Adams Regattas events in Lightning, Thistles, and Flying Scot sailboats in the 1960's and 1970's. Judy as crew to Cindy Stieffel and Amy Chapman won the Adams National Championship in 1977. They returned in 1980, and with Judy as skipper, and Amy Chapman and Charlotte Gordon as crew, they won the Adams National Championship again. In 1977, Marc Eagan also won his first National Championship.

Walter Gillican Chamberlain (1946-2013) became interested in sailing because of his family. Donald Chamberlain, Sr., his father, sailed at the Southern Yacht Club (SYC) and passed on his love of sailing to his children, Walter, Donald, Jr., and Bay. All were excellent sailors. Walter's family moved to Bay St. Louis in the early 1950's when they inherited the house at 648 North Beach Blvd. Here Walter learned to sail and enjoyed the freedom to sail all over the Bay. His friends, Chuck Breath, Basil Kennedy, and many others in the same age group, were doing the same thing. They got good at it! They also crewed for friends who owned larger sailboats that raced all along the Gulf Coast. Their experience grew. Walter became a member of the first winning Junior and Senior Lipton team in 1963.

During the 1970's the young sailors were not content to limit their racing to the Gulf Coast. Some wanted to go to national championships, and they were encouraged by older members to do so. Walter and his friend, Harry Chapman, two of these older members, pursued this challenge by attending US Sailing meetings. With this experience, their knowledge of the racing rules and race management increased. As a result, the quality of the BWYC racing teams

also grew. Several of the aforementioned local sailors did win National Championships. Some of their pictures and trophies are displayed at the club.

Marc Eagan (b. 1955) was born and reared in New Orleans, the son of Maurice Eagan (1929-2001) and Miriam Smith (1930-1997). Maurice started the Eagan Insurance Agency and was Commodore of the BWYC in 1978. Marc married Gayle Entringer in 1978, and they had four children, Marcus, Jordon, Andrew, and Mallory.

Marc's sailing career started in 1963 when he was eight years old. That day was his first day at the BWYC Summer Sailing Camp, and his father drove him to the pier and deposited him. Marc loved this sport and remembers the crusty older sailors who instructed him in those formative years—Charles Breath, Walter Chamberlain, Basil Kennedy, Bill Reeves, and Dick Reeves. Marc crewed for great sailors such as Harry Chapman, and on one occasion, they won the interclub competition at PCYC (Pass Christian Yacht Club) which was a twelve Fish Boat round robin.

In 1969 the Flying Scot replaced the Fish Boat. Unlike the Fish Boat, the Flying Scot had a spinnaker sail, which Marc quickly mastered. The spinnaker sail is a

large kite-like sheet that is employed on the downwind runs that balloon out in front of the rest of the sailing rig, often brightly colored. At age seventeen (1972) Marc graduated to Skipper from Crew and competed in the Junior Lipton Regattas and USYRU (US SAILING) junior events. Later, Marc would be sailing in senior regattas against some of the best sailors in the country, who did not have the same skills with the relatively new Flying Scot. BWYC needed a team of young, ambitious, cut-throat sailors to master the Flying Scot before the rest of the country had become National Champions. Marc and his sailing buddies figured out how to win races consistently against the best of the best of that era. Simply put, Marc explains that a typical triangular race course would pit contestants so that the first leg is upwind requiring sailboats to tack to the first mark. The challenge is to get a good start and "round the mark" before any of the other boats. Then you raise the spinnaker quickly and sail full throttle to the next mark and then to the finish line at the end of the third leg of the course.

Woody Stieffel was Marc's sailing partner in their youth. Woody wanted to write a book about how to sail a Flying Scot to win big regattas. Buddy Eagan was also in this clique of advanced sailors. Judy Reeves, Cindy Stieffel, Amy Chapman, and Charlotte Gordon were all National Champions in the 1970's. Marc competed in 1976 at SYC in the North American Flying Scot Championship and came in second. In 1977 he came in first acquiring his first national championship. In this time frame, Marc wanted to train for the Olympics, but his father overruled his request and sent him to NYU and then London to learn his family trade. BWYC has twenty-four National Champions, and Marc is our "Top Gun" with twelve sailing titles to his name.

In conclusion, from 1949 to 1983, BWYC evolved from a small-time, fishing village, local sailing



This painting of two Fish Boats that were popular from 1920-1969 was created by the accomplished local artist, Barbara Brodtman.



In 1969 the Flying Scot replaced the Fish Boat for GYC competition. This fiberglass sailboat with a balloon-shaped, retractable spinnaker sail in front of the boat is used in downwind legs in races to augment the wind power of the stationary main and jib sails



This photo shows Clyde Koerner, Sr., at home in his workshop preparing to build his next model. As a member of the Hancock County Historical Society, Mr. Koerner has offered to display a different model he has built every two months at the Kate Lobrano House, home of the Hancock County Historical Society.

club into a serious contender on the National Racing Circuit. In spite of the damage caused by the Hurricane of 1947, the “movers and shakers” of the two cities had great faith in the prospect of a post-war boom in the economy, both locally and nationally. A yacht club was considered an important catalyst for growth and prosperity of Hancock County. Sailing, fishing, and golf were the most popular sports on the Gulf Coast for residents’ children and adults.

SOURCES:

- Breath, Charles Anthony. Personal interview, April 10, 2023.
- Chamberlain, Malin Davis. Personal interview, March 28, 2023.
- Chapman, Harry Gelpi. Personal interview, June 30, 2023.
- Counce, Oliver J. *The Sesquicentennial of the Southern Yacht Club of New Orleans (1849-1999)*. Metairie, LA: Franklin Southland Printing, 2000.
- Cromarte, Catherine Martin. *A Centennial Salute (1920-2020): A History of the Gulf Yachting Association*. Brookfield, MO; The Donning Company Publishers, 2020.
- Eagen, Marc. Personal interview, October 19, 2023.
- Reeves, Judith. Personal interview, July 20, 2023.



This model of the El Dorado submersible oil rig was built by Clyde Koerner, Sr., age 99. It is on display at the Kate Lobrano House.



Two sloops round the mark at a BWYC regatta in the Mississippi Sound in 1913. Note that the rectangular main sail has a gaff pole or wooden spar on the superior margin. The gaff sail rig has been popular for centuries because it allows for a larger sail area, improved control, and a shorter mast for support which means less stress.

This photo is from the Mallard Collection

NEW MEMBERS

Neva Cooper
Midland, TX

Jeff Damiens
Bay St. Louis, MS

Philip and Yvonne Garcia
Bay St. Louis, MS

Joanne Radosta
Diamondhead, MS

Buck Ramond
Waveland, MS

Obie Watts
Diamondhead, MS

Kate Wendel
Bay St. Louis, MS



All of the photographs of the Saint Augustine Centennial in the January 2024 edition of the newsletter were taken by Melanie Cole. We apologize for not listing her as the photographer.

100 MEN HALL D.B.A.

MISSISSIPPI - U.S.



MUSIC / CULTURE / COMMUNITY



BOOKER FEST
every labor day weekend



Hist23-10.pub

CRAB & SHRIMP FEAST

EVERY NIGHT

All Day Saturday & Sunday

\$49.95

*Tax & gratuity
not included.*



www.silverflipper-ms.com • 1-866-SLIPPER • 1-866-754-7737
5000 South Beach Blvd. • Bay St. Louis, MS 38520

JUBILEE BUFFET



GARDENIA TEA ROOM

BY ALMOST HOME
www.gardeniatearoom.com
228-332-2334

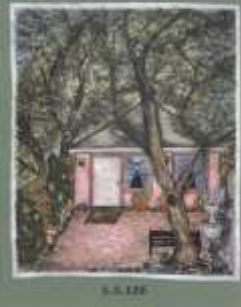


Steve B. Treutel
Vice President
Senior Financial Advisor

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

THE LITTLE HOUSE OF HEALING



In *The Little House of Healing* by L.L. Lee, nine troubled individuals from a recently divorced woman to a courageous cancer battler, seek solace and a fresh start in the serene haven of Miss Lucy's peaceful Bay St. Louis cottage. This inspirational novel explores redemption and the resilience of the human spirit.

Available at Amazon.com, Historical Society, and some local shops in Bay St. Louis

PATRICK MARTINEZ
Financial Advisor



T 228.466.9888 843 Highway 90
F 228.466.9978 Bay Saint Louis, MS 39520
patrick.martinez@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



1004 Memorial Blvd
P.O. Box 418
Picayune, MS 39468
Fax 601-799-0202



MARTHA FORD, Broker, GRI SFR

MARTYFORD@BELLSOUTH.NET

CELL: 601-590-2988

www.fordrity.com

Est. 1949



SUPPORT THE HANCOCK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BY PLACING YOUR AD HERE. IT COSTS ONLY \$100 FOR AN AD THIS SIZE FOR A FULL YEAR!

ZACH BUTTERWORTH

HESSE & BUTTERWORTH, PLLC

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

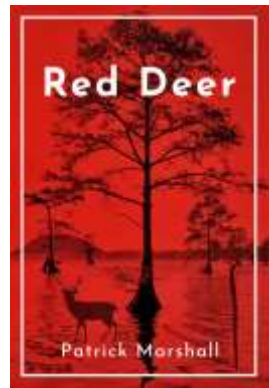
ZBUTTERWORTHLAW@BELLSOUTH.NET

POST OFFICE BOX 3567
BAY ST. LOUIS, MS 39521

PH. 228-255-7500 Fx. 228-255-9009

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

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



Red Deer is fantasy infused historical fiction. Jesse Walker, a 16 year old from present day Gulf Coast Mississippi, is transported back through time to the legendary birthplace of the Choctaw people, NanihWaiya village.

**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
 Ofc: 228-380-0295
 Licensed • Bonded • Insured
Knowledgeable • Professional

David Mayley
 mayleys.pest.control@gmail.com
 603 Esplanade Ave.
 Bay St. Louis, MS 39520

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

Biloxi:
 2505 Pass Rd
 228-385-1177

Diamondhead:
 5400 Indian Hill
 228-467-2272

• 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. Truitt, CRP
 President
 SouthGroup Insurance - Gulf Coast

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.shops of century hall.com



HANCOCK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 3356
BAY ST. LOUIS, MS 39521

STREET ADDRESS: 108 CUE ST.
PHONE: 228.467.4090

**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