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HISTORIAN



OF HANCOCK COUNTY

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Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

March 2024

COMING EVENTS AT LOBRANO HOUSE

The monthly luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, March 21, 2024, at noon at the Kate Lobrano House. The guest speaker will be Jason Saucier, *Shrimp & Crab Bureau, Office of Marine Fisheries*. **Reservations are required** and may be made by calling 228-467-4090. **Please call by noon on Wednesday, March 23** 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 barbeque pulled pork, corn pudding, baked beans, rolls, and triple chocolate brownies.



The current Commodore of the BWYC is Marc Eagan who was born and reared in New Orleans. Marc's sailing career started in 1963 when he was eight years old and went to the BWYC Summer Sailing Camp. He is our "Top Gun" with twelve National Champion sailing titles to his name.

HISTORY OF THE BAY -WAVELAND YACHT CLUB (1984-2023)

By
James Keating, M.D.

The historic fishing village of Bay St. Louis has been an attractive port where mariners have docked their boats for over two hundred years. In the previous Age of Sail, the Bay harbor moored both commercial and recreational schooners and sloops. Our taverns have always been full of sailors relaxing after a long day hauling their catch of fish, shrimp, oysters, and crabs. In the second half of the Twentieth Century, the sailing community enjoyed the establishment of the

BWYC. The movers and shakers of this yacht club were multigenerational locals who were stewards of the economy of the town as well as the yacht club, which has fostered a recognizable sense of place. This narrative history is the product of interviews with the men and women in the membership of the club in the stated time frame 1984-2023. BWYC has enjoyed strong and effective leadership over the decades, and we are grateful that these people were willing to share their life stories to enrich the following history of the yacht club. The story of the growth and development of this club house and its sailing program is a tale worth telling.

By the 1980's, another great sailor with important leadership skills made his mark on the waters of the Gulf Coast as well as the Board

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“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.”

of Directors. John Cornell “Corky” Hadden was born in New Orleans in 1960. He was the son of Richard Irvine G. Hadden (1928-2002) and Margaret Boh (1932-2014). Richard was an attorney and was Commodore of the BWYC in 1962. Richard’s father, Callender F. Hadden, was co-owner of Standard Supply and Hardware. Corky’s wife, Molly Douglass was born in 1961. She is the daughter of George Douglass, Jr., (1935-2021) and Molly Mangham (1938-2018). George was the co-owner and CEO of Pontchartrain Material Corporation. Molly and Corky married in 1987 and have three children, Molly Margaret (1988), John C. Jr. (1989) and William Douglas (1990).

In 1984 Marc Eagan (skipper), Beau LeBlanc (crew) and Corky (crew) won the Mallory Championship. The Mallory is US Sailing’s most coveted trophy for Adult Sailing Championship. The race is sailed on provided boats in a round robin format providing three days of challenging racing by sailors from around the country. In addition, Corky was part of the BWYC team that won the Hinman Trophy for the US Sailing Team Race Championship in 1987 which

made Corky a National Champion.

During the 1970’s Walter Chamberlain and Harry Chapman had encouraged the young sailors to participate in national sailing events. At the same time Walter and Harry went to committee meetings of organizations such as the Mallory Sailing organization lobbying to let BWYC host their regatta on the Bay of St. Louis which it did in 1980. Walter advanced in the US Sailing organization to Secretary, and he was later given a Lifetime Achievement Award. These men were not only leaders at the BWYC but of the national governing bodies of competitive sailing. Walter was also Chairman of the Appellate Court. Harry was on this committee and Secretary of the Judge’s Committee. Marc was encouraged to be active in the governing body of the North American Flying Scott National Championship organization, and he was instrumental in getting their race in the Bay in 1978 and 1979. The club had achieved national prominence by this combined activity of sailing and government.

Walter evolved as an expert in Race Management and the sailing code of behavior. He was an esteemed judge for such races, and

THE PRESIDENT’S CORNER

Award of Merit was given to the Hancock County Historical Society (HCHS) on Friday, February 23 at an award ceremony in Jackson. The Mississippi Historical Society recognizes individuals and organizations for their contributions to the preservation of the history of Mississippi. HCHS received the award for its production of *Mercy Train: Next Stop Bay St. Louis*. This one act play was written by Beverly Frater and directed by Jim Codling, both board members of HCHS. This Orphan Train play tells the story of five children who found their home in Bay Saint Louis in the early 1900s. The play was very well received as evidenced by five sold-out performances.

Beverly has written another play commemorating the Battle of the Bay in 1814 and plans for this production are in the works. Stay tuned!

Your dues sustain us, so if you have not paid yours for 2024, please do so. You may pay by credit card at our website.

“*A vote is like a rifle; its usefulness depends on the character of the user.*”
Teddy Roosevelt

Chris Roth
President



The fourth BWYC depicted in this architect's rendition/image was financed and constructed after Hurricane Katrina by a bold Building Committee under the leadership of Commander Ted Dawson convinced the yacht club and Bay Waveland community would fully recover economically from the aforementioned catastrophe.

his opinions were respected across the national waterfront, enhancing his role as a parliamentarian. US Sailing was grateful for his leadership because he was able to get things done at their meetings and his promoting of good fellowship between clubs at regatta, with a premium of the concept of having fun. Previously, Walter and Harry were concerned that the various yacht clubs were weaponizing the protest activity after races, and that most sailors were actually rather ignorant of the rules of engagement. Nevertheless, Walter's proudest moment of his life was that he was elected Commodore of the BWYC in 1987. He was the first son of a previous BWYC Commodore to also become a Commodore. Walter would later be Commodore of the GYA (Gulf Yachting Association) and the Mississippi Yachting Association. His true interest was supporting junior sailing. Consequently, there are two trophies dedicated to junior sailors, one at the BWYC and another with the GYA.

In 1993 Corky and co-chairman Henry Martinez persuaded the BWYC to build, operate, and maintain a swimming pool. Yacht clubs on the coast began to realize the importance of membership dues for a club to thrive. The board

came to appreciate the joint mission of the club serving as a "country club" as well as a sailing club if it hoped to grow and prosper. The sailing program was important, but the club needed a decent restaurant, swimming pool, a Ladies Auxiliary and a youth program. Corky has served as a mediator in the BWYC over issues of disagreements and was first elected to the board at age twenty-one. In his opinion, most conflicts have been personality conflicts between strong individuals who mean well. One such issue was the management of money. There are always different philosophies about the BWYC mission such as sailing verses country club or sailors verses "chicken-eaters." Corky understood the need for both groups to find a home at BWYC in order to have the membership level needed to financially support the entire operation.

By the end of the 1990's the club was in a bit of a slump. Fortunately, Judy Reeves retired from teaching in California and returned full-time to the Bay. She worked hard on the mission of rebuilding the youth sailing program. In 2000 she was elected Commodore and revitalized the whole yacht club program. In 2002

Corky took over as Commodore. In this same time frame, Zak and Sarah Fanderg returned from college and won races in National Championships. The club, represented by Marcus Eagan, Marc's oldest son, won in 1997 the only national championship won by BWYC in the decade of the 1990's. Zak would win the Mallory three straight years in three different sailboats in 2003, 2004, and 2005. Sarah won a National Championship in 2005.

Things were definitely looking up at the turn of the Twenty-first Century. Camors Christopher "Chris" Roth was born in 1946, the son of Richard Roth (1913-2001) and Alice Camors (1915-200). Chris married Constance "Connie" Navare (b. 1947). They reared four children: Elizabeth (1973), Christopher "Chip," (1976), Matthew (1977), and Ashley (1982). Chris worked for Hancock Bank managing the Hancock Insurance Agency until he retired in 2014. Chris has serious management skills and was elected Commodore in 2023. Chris made it his mission to balance the budget and have a profitable year during his term of office, and he succeeded. He modernized the accounting system of the club.

Any period of Gulf Coast history must include the occasional catastrophic hurricane which became a seminal event for that time frame. Katrina was a Class III monster hurricane hitting Hancock County on August 29, 2005. The initial insult was a thirty-foot tide that flooded the clubhouse. Subsequently, isolated tornados and hurricane-force winds generated much damage to all the buildings on the waterfront. Nevertheless, the twenty-seven-foot storm surge that followed the initial flooding was even more destructive in nature. Water is dense and heavy and a cubic yard of H₂O weighs 1,700 pounds. The BWYC clubhouse was totally



In 2019 the GYA made the new high performance Viper 640 the official one-design sailboat for the Capdeville Series. BWYC sailors were the Viper 640 World Champions in 2019 and 2021

destroyed. Fifty-one people died in Hancock County.

Tucker "Ted" Edward Dawson, Jr., was born in 1934 and married Margene Rae Sweizer (b. 1937) in 1965. Ted graduated from the School of Theology of the University of the South in Sewanee, TN, and was ordained a priest in 1963. Ted retired in 1998 and moved to Waveland. Their cottage was destroyed in Hurricane Katrina, and they moved into a cottage in Old Town in 2005. Ted was Commodore in 2006 and was living in Diamondhead after the storm. Ted marshaled the available scattered club members and served as Chairman of the Building Committee for the mission of setting up a new clubhouse. The Building Committee included Walter Chamberlain (Secretary), Jimmy Crane (Construction Chairman), Joe D. Benvenuti, Steve Brettel, Vincent Inbornone, Basil Kennedy, Henry Martinez, Yuki Northington, and Cary and Chris Trapani. Jimmy Crane and Henry Martinez were of significant help throughout the process because of their building experience. The strategy for financing the new club included assessments

(\$600,000), SBA Loan (\$600,000), Insurance (\$600,000) and sale of Zero-Coupon Bonds (\$250,000). The new club cost \$2.3M.

Ted remembers a frequently heard criticism voiced as a question, "Why are we building a Taj Mahal club house when a smaller and less expensive building is all that we need?" It was, he recalls, upbeat comments by Chris Roth that helped move the board into a more optimistic position on the possible recovery of the club and the Bay Waveland community, and furthered the process of constructing the building we now have. During the construction period, while operating out of two trailers connected by a covered deck, Ted believed that if a bar could be operated and the harbor made navigable, we would have the beginning of a yacht club. This was accomplished well enough that BWYC could host the 2006 Lipton Cup, which we won. Ted has served as Fleet Chaplain since 2002. Although his time as Commander was hectic and unusual, he feels good about all of his experiences in BWYC.

Dina Hill Rosetti was born in 1987 and is a lifelong resident of Bay St. Louis. She was elected Commodore of the BWYC in 2017. Other members of her family who have served as Commodore include her uncle, the late Commodore Anthony "Trap" Trapani, and cousins Christopher F. Trapani and Cary Trapani. Since joining the club in 2007 the whole family has embraced the activities of the club, and it has been a very positive experience for her family as a whole. Dina has been editor of the *Jib Sheet* for fifteen years. This newsletter has grown in size and quality under her management. Dina served as the photographer for the club events and writes event-flyers. In 2017, Dina served her one-year term as Commodore of the BWYC without a manager or an assistant manager employed by the club because a replacement manager had not been recruited.

The Ladies Auxiliary of the

BWYC was quite active in the 1970's and 1980's. Two women, Verma Brannan and Theresa Bourgeois, were key leaders of the organization. Sadly, with the passing of the two ladies, the club was relatively inactive in the 90's. However the Ladies Auxiliary did reorganize in the early 2000's and has been healthy and active ever since.

Basil, along with John Baxter, Leo Seal, Jr., and a great amount of encouragement from Cleland Powell, established the BWYC Community Sailing Foundation. The Foundation has purchased five sailboats, a cardiac defibrillator, provided channel marker lights, provided numerous sailing scholarships, and along with other activities has provided several safety classes for the community.

The 21st Century witnessed a new generation of champion sailors competing for the glory of the BWYC and the GYA. The aforementioned Fanbergs (Zak and Sarah) were joined in national competition becoming National Champions by Kippy Chamberlain, Eugene Schmitt, David Blouin, Kathleen Santa Cruz, Anne Edwards, John Bowden, and Peter and Tommy Heausler. However, the most exciting team of BWYC sailors to enter national and world competition were first Marcus Eagan, to be followed in 2009 by his brother, Andrew Eagan, and then Jackson Benvenuti in 2011. These three sailors embraced the new Viper 640 sport sailboat and became world champions in 2019 (skipper Marcus) and 2021 (skipper Jackson). The Viper 640 is a 2-4-person high performance sailboat. It became the official one-design sailboat for GYA Capdeville Series in 2019.

In conclusion, the BWYC has survived and prospered over the last seventy-five years. The club has fulfilled its two important missions. The first was to build a sailing program that produced National Champions that brought pride and a good reputation to the club and the GYA. Nevertheless, the second mission to establish a popular country club for

members of the community have gained precedence . Both non-competing missions are necessary to attract a large dues-paying membership to finance the organization. This history includes biographical material about some of the members and families that fostered these missions. However, it should be noted that not every important member who made significant contributions to the success of the club in the past could be included or listed in this short history. The BWYC sailing program has proved the adage that there have never been better mariners in the world than American sailors. May all the sailors, young and old, on the Gulf Coast enjoy favorable winds and following seas.

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ARBOR DAY IN THE BAY 2024

By
Anita Warner

Arbor Day means tree day. Arbor is the Latin word for tree. Arbor Day started in 1872, and it was nationally recognized in 1972. Arbor Day is celebrated by planting trees as a way to sustainably protect our planet’s natural resources and as a gift for future generations. It is typically observed the last Friday in April, but here in Mississippi, because of our climate, we celebrate on the second Friday in February. This year we celebrated on February 9. The winter is prime time to install new trees and shrubs so that they can become established before the heat and humidity of our summers.

The Bay Waveland Garden club annually installs a tree in a prominent location around town. This year the Garden Club partnered with the Hancock County Chamber of Commerce to publicize and celebrate Arbor Day. Katharine Ohman, chair of the Chamber Beautification Committee obtained 15 gallon specimen live oaks and crepe myrtles as a donation from Don Batson of Green Forest Nursery. The trees in turn were given to various nonprofits around town including Christ Episcopal Church, Main Street Methodist, Our Lady of the Gulf, Gulfside Assembly, St. Augustine, and Saint Stanislaus. Anita Warner, chair of the Arbor Day committee, organized the event held on February 9, where a live oak was installed in the front yard of Main Street Methodist in the heart of downtown, just across from the Hancock County Courthouse.

The Bay Waveland Garden Club and the Hancock County Historical Society maintain the Live Oak Tree Registry. Their mission is to register live oak trees that are one hundred years’ old or older within Hancock County. In addition it is the intention to protect and conserve these natural resources that promote historical events, aesthetic value, and environmental significance. The project operates in conjunction with the Societe’ des Arbres, the state tree registry. The Hancock County Live Oak Registry chair is Anita Warner.



Arbor Day at Methodist Church
Photo L to R
Bob Huet; Katharine Ohman, Chamber Beautification Chair; Marilyn Maloney; Henry Winter; church member; Wendy McDonald; Barbara Huet; Anita Warner, Arbor Day Chair; and Raul Verduzco.

Arbor Day at Christ Episcopal Church
Photos L to R
Ginny Littlefield (President of Bay Waveland Garden Club), Anita Warner (Arbor Day and Live Oak Registry Chair), Raul Verduzco (our erstwhile tree planter)



Arbor Day at Main Street Methodist
Photos L to R: Marilyn Maloney; Henry Winter; church member; Anita Warner, Arbor Day Chair; Barbara and Bob Huet; Ginny Littlefield, BWGC president; and Tish Williams, Chamber Executive Director.



Jim Codling (left), representing the Hancock County Historical Society, accepts the Award of Merit from Mississippi Historical Society president William Bowlin.

The Hancock County Historical Society was honored by the Mississippi Historical Society for its production of the historical drama *Mercy Train: Next Stop Bay St. Louis*. The one act play was written by Beverly Frater, a member of HCHS Board of Directors. Several children who rood the train found homes and families in the Bay area. Jim Codling, who is also a member of the HCHS Board, was the play's director, assisted by Beverly. Jim and his wife Christine attended the Mississippi Historical Society meeting in Oxford to accept the award for HCHS.

Founded in 1858, the Mississippi Historical Society encourages outstanding work in interpreting, teaching, and preserving Mississippi history. Membership is open to anyone, and benefits include receiving the *Journal of Mississippi History*, the *Mississippi History* newsletter and discounts at the Mississippi Museum Store.



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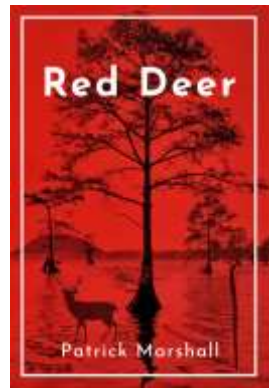
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