



## League City Historical Society

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[leaguecityhistory.org](http://leaguecityhistory.org)

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May 2011    *Newsletter*    Kathie Nenninger Editor [knenninger@verizon.net](mailto:knenninger@verizon.net)

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### May 26th Meeting

The League City Historical Society has reserved Butler's Courtyard for a special meeting of the Historical Society focused on restoration of the Ghirardi House in Heritage Park. The meeting will start at 6:30 to allow time for socializing and to enjoy a potluck assortment of food, snacks and desserts. Nick Cimino will make a presentation on efforts to preserve the Ghirardi House as a museum devoted to the history of the Italian families of the Galveston Bay area including League City, Dickinson and beyond.



from the president...

*Ronnie Richards*

April and May have been a very productive month for the League City Historical Society. I want to start by personally thanking Bettie Moss for her efforts in landscaping the museum and school house property. Surrounded by a great time of volunteers that included Mike Conwell, George Weisskopf, Jeff Hansen, Kent Moss, Richard Lewis, Catharin Lewis, Catherine Gill and Evelyn Garland, a new irrigation system for the schoolhouse landscaping was installed, tree limbs were cut along with a general spruce-up of the schoolhouse property. Also thank you Kathie Nenninger and Pam Kinsler for adding plants and to Alecyia Gallaway for the donation of the oxblood lily bulbs (schoolhouse lilies.)

Also this month we received a donation of a wonderful vintage working pump organ from Barbara Humphrey Walker. According to Barbara, her dad Larry Humphrey "would have been pleased to know that the League City Historical Society members continue to be a dedicated group." He helped restore the barber shop and ice house around 1994 before his unexpected death from a heart attack in his late 50's. He was a clerk for the Missouri-Kansas-Texas (MKT) Railroad until he retired. Her mother, Carolyn Humphrey, still lives in Camino South in Clear Lake. Their family moved to the Clear Lake area in 1971 where Barbara and her sister were raised. According to Barbara, "it feels good to give back to the community where I grew up. What was once a bedroom community is now part of a collection of interrelated hometowns where multiple generations have planted roots. I appreciate the Historical Society's dedication to

### Calendar



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|------------|---|
| May 26     | <b>LCHS Meeting</b><br>Nick Cimino<br>L.C. Italian House Museum<br><i>at Butler's Courtyard 6:30pm</i><br><b>LCHS Meeting</b>   |
| June 30    | <b>Megan Licklitter-Mundoon</b><br>Amelia Earhart Archeological dig in the South Pacific<br>West Bay Common School<br>Children's Museum<br>210 Kansas Street, League City |
| July 4     | <b>Teddy Bear Parade</b>  |
| October 6  | <b>Living History Dinner</b>  |
| October 29 | <b>Ghosts of the Past</b>   |

preserving the area's history for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations."

At the April meeting the League City Historical Society was recognized with a Historic Preservation Award by the Sam Houston Chapter of the DAR. Activities that led to this recognition include our on-going "teaching" one-room school house/museum, the annual Christmas Home Tour, Ghosts of the Past Tour and the restoration and renovation of historical buildings.

Two of our Society members were instrumental in our recognition by the DAR and were individually recognized at the DAR Annual Awards Luncheon and 35<sup>th</sup> Chapter Anniversary Celebration recently held at Bay Oaks Country Club. Deborah Gammon and Diana Dornak were awarded Community Service Awards. I was privileged to attend the luncheon and participate in the awards to Deborah and Diana.



Ronnie Richards, Alice Braud-Jones and Deborah Gammon



Ronnie Richards, Diana Dornak and Alice Braud-Jones

Last but not least, please be sure to attend *the May 26<sup>th</sup> meeting which will be held at Butler's Courtyard*. This will be Italian night and will feature a presentation by Nick Cimino who will tell us about the restoration of the Ghirardi House in Heritage Park..



We thank *Maureen Peltier, Raymond Barrett and Dorothy Ludwig* for this month's refreshments



## Meeting Minutes

*Diane Kerkhove*

April 28th meeting

The April meeting met early at 5 p.m. with 20 people present. It was noted that dues should be paid.

Catharin reported that the museum has been busy with good sales in the gift shop.

The Galveston Historical Commission will meet here in May.

Richard and Catharin Lewis will be going to New Jersey in June to attend the County Association of Museums.

President Ronnie Richards welcomed guests, Alice Braud-Jones and Linda Van Malden of the Daughter's of the Revolution. Alice gave information on the D.A.R., which is 122 years old and has 170,000 members. Their motto is *God Home Country*.

They presented a plaque and pin to President Ronnie Richards and the Society for its work. They spoke of the activities: school museum, historical programs, historic homes promotion, live oaks data, historical dinner, Ghosts of the Past. They noted that our Society is now recognized nationally.

Announcements:

May 7 need for gardening work. A pump organ donation will be dedicated.

May 14 work day.

July 4 Teddy Bear Parade.

October 6 Annual Dinner.

October 29 Ghosts of the Past.

Ronnie discussed a need for promotion of city activities. Kathy Weisskopf reported the city is planning a tunnel project to preserve watering of the live oaks.

Ronnie dismissed the meeting.



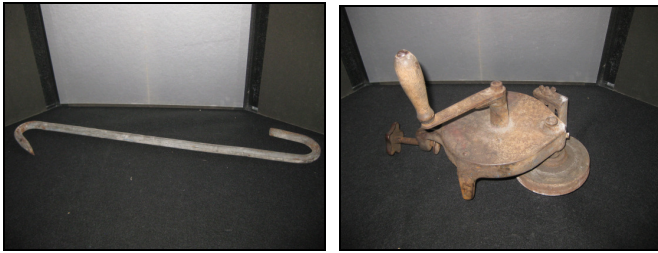
## MusNews

*Catharin Lewis,  
Director / Curator*

Can you guess what this is?



That is right, a tire tank, recently donated by Madeline Kotila of Houston. She also donated a sausage hook and a hand grindstone. These items are good examples of working hands at the turn of the century. We will be putting these objects on exhibit in the near future. We thank Madeline Kotila for these items new to our collection.



We also want to thank Shawn and Barbara Walker for the pump organ that I mentioned in a separate article. It has found its new home here. Plan to come and hear it work.

During our recent Garden work day, two items were found in the school while digging the trenches for our sprinkler system. We found a very rusty hook about 5 inches long and what appears to be a rusty bent handle about 5" long. We are adding these objects to our archival dig collection.

April had 436 visitors bringing in \$1572.93 for program fees, \$1278.08 in gift shop sales and a \$50 donation from a walk in visitor. We held classes for groups from Dickinson, Houston, Kingwood, Spring, Alvin, Pearland, Galveston, Humble and League City. We had walk-in visitors from Scotland, Houston and Seabrook. I wish I could log in the number of others who visit the museum while geocaching or who stop for special photo shoots. These people come after hours and I sometimes stumble meet these visitors if I need to check on the Museum or put out the trash.

We have had a very interesting month so far with a busy calendar, lots of visitors and donations to our collection. The month is not even over and we have had 441 visitors so far with groups coming from Houston, Magnolia, Cypress and League City. We have had Adult groups, scouts, 5<sup>th</sup> graders, 2<sup>nd</sup> graders, 4<sup>th</sup> graders and mixed ages of homeschoolers. We have collected \$1,450.00 in program fees and \$894.48 in gift shop sales. We still

have more groups scheduled for the remainder of the month.

We are hosting the Galveston Historical Commission meeting here on May 18. We are excited to share our facilities with this organization. We are also hosting the AASLH webinar event on June 21 for the last session that was postponed in March.

Summer plans are already in the works with new volunteer trainings, a summer intern program, special events, exhibit work and classes scheduled. We are excited about the upcoming months and look forward to the extra helping hands and some new changes we hope to implement. Watch for details in the upcoming newsletters.



## Spring Garden 'Thyme' *Bettie Moss*

To The Greatest Schoolhouse Crew,  
I just wanted to thank you each personally-  
Mike Conwell, George Weisskopf, Jeff

Hansen, Richard Lewis, Catharin Lewis, Catherine Gill and Evelyn Garland—for all your loyal commitment today to help us install a new irrigation system for the schoolhouse landscaping, to help cut and clean up the intrusive tree limbs, along with other needed spruce-up of the schoolhouse property. In addition, Catherine and Evelyn washed lots of windows today. I really appreciate the dedication of all of you toward making the schoolhouse area more attractive and functional. You can be proud of what we accomplished together. You did a great job and it looks very nice!

I'd also like to thank Kathie Nenninger and Pam Kinser for planting the pentas and ageratum near the schoolhouse steps in early April and to Alecyia Gallaway for the donation of the oxblood lily bulbs (schoolhouse lilies). Kudos to Pam and Kathie for helping me dig the lily bulbs from Alecyia's yard a few weeks ago and getting them over to the schoolhouse. Also, thanks to Pam for helping me two weeks ago to dig a new flower bed, amend it with new soil and border it with historical bricks, making a new place for the lilies. Everyone can watch for them to bloom in the fall.

The watering system will give us consistent moisture for our landscape investment. I plan to add a few more plants in the near future when I see that we have the timers set where they should be. We just need to get some new mulch in the flower beds before the onslaught of our Texas summer sun. It will help keep the water in and the weeds out!

## Recent Museum Donations



Pictured with the newly acquired pump organ are Barbara Humphrey Walker and Carolyn Humphrey

This beautiful pump organ was donated by Shawn and Barbara Humphrey Walker of Houston, Texas on May 7, 2011.

The organ and stool have been beautiful furniture pieces, first in Shawn's grandparents home and then in their home for many years. Barbara grew up playing the piano and organ and served as pianist for four churches. She enjoyed playing this pump organ at numerous family occasions and hopes that it will continue to be used to play music for others' enjoyment as part of the museum.

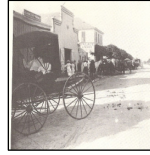
Barbara's parents were once active members of the League City Historical Society. Her father Larry helped restore the Barber Shop / Icehouse and contributed much research as the Historical Society's Historian until his death in the 1994. Before retirement, he worked as a clerk for the Missouri Kansas Texas Railroad. Carolyn, her mother taught at Clear Lake Intermediate and Clear Lake High until she retired. Carolyn still lives in Clear Lake and Barbara's sister Laura and her husband Paul Donathan live nearby raising their two children.

Barbara is the senior director of alumni affairs for Baylor College of Medicine and her husband Shawn is a senior supply chain analyst for Halliburton. Their daughter Chelsea is a college student and their son Gordon is still in high school.

"Try pumping your feet, playing the notes and singing at the same time. It definitely gets your heart pumping!"

Barbara compared pumping and organ to *Dance Revolution* and its cardiovascular workout.

We thank Shawn and Barbara Walker for this wonderful pump organ and the history that she shared. This has found its new home and we look forward to enjoying the sounds of this pump organ for years to come.



## League City Historic District Commission Report

LCHS Rep. to the LCHDC  
...Fay Dudney

*April 21, 2011*

A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to add an addition onto the rear of an existing residential structure at 813 3<sup>rd</sup> Street was approved.

Amendments to the Historic District Commission's Policies and Procedures relating to new procedures for failed motions and tied votes were approved.

Administrative Approvals were given to Annette's Emporium for an Operations Permit at 501 E. Main Street, Suite 2 – and to The Oaks Spa for a sign permit at 812 E. Main Street.

The next regular meeting for the Commission is scheduled for May 12, 2011, at 6:00 pm, in League City Council Chambers. Meetings are open to the public.

*May 12, 2011*

A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to add new antennas and guide wires on existing towers atop the League City Fire Station at 116 Michigan Avenue was approved.

A request to make an improvement to a sign at 1015 E. Main Street was conditionally approved if the improvement requested conforms to the design of the existing sign.

Tony Allender, Director of Planning and Land Management, presented a proposal prepared by Heather McKnight, League City Arborist, to add canopy lights to the oaks along Main Street at Helen's Garden. Weather-tight conduits, junction boxes, and LED fixtures would be attached to the trunk of the trees and to the branch collars of the limbs using small stainless steel nails or screws, to create an upward lighting effect. The process is minimally invasive to the tree and is comparable to installing lightning protection or cabling of limbs. If funding is available, the trees in League Park will be included.

*Administrative Approvals*

Approved a sign permit at 905 E. Main, Main St. Mattress, and at 812 E. Main, Mrs. Gatti's Gourmet.



## 2011 League City Historical Society

### Dues Form

Dues for various types of memberships are as listed below.

Choose the membership level that is best for you. Complete the form below and mail it with your check

**Mail to: League City Historical Society, Inc.  
P. O. Box 1642  
League City, Texas 77574**

- \$25 Single Membership
- \$40 Family Membership
  - \$15 Senior Citizen Membership (65 years old and older)
- \$50 Organization Membership
- \$250 Life Membership

Note: If you have paid your dues in October 2010 or later, you are current for the year 2011.

Please update your membership information.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(If Family Membership, please include names of family members.)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

email address \_\_\_\_\_

- Check if your name, address or email has changed recently.
- Check if you would like to receive your newsletter, meeting minutes and/or meeting notices by email, to help save on postage.