



## Amite County Historical and Genealogical Society

Dawn Taylor, President  
 Wayne B. Anderson, Secretary  
 Nancy Martin, Vice Pres.  
 N. Gay Blalock, Treasurer  
 William G. Barron, Council-at-large  
 Wayne B. Anderson — Newsletter Editor

April 2015 Vol. 12, No. 4

Without a past, there is no future

### Next meeting:

There will be a regular business meeting at 10:00 am on April 11, 2015, in the conference room of the Liberty Library.

### AMITE COUNTY HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Minutes of the March 14, 2015 meeting

**DRAFT**

### Future Meeting Schedule

**April 11, 2015, 10:00 am** — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

**May 2, 2015, 10:00 am** — Participation in Liberty Heritage Day activities. No regular meeting.

**June 13, 2015, 10:00 am** — Annual membership meeting with election of officers in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

**July 11, 2015** — Traditionally there has been no meeting in July. If it is decided that a meeting is needed, this listing will be updated with the details.

**August 8, 2015, 10:00 am** — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

**September 12, 2015, 10:00 am** — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

**October 10, 2015, 10:00 am** — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

**November 14, 2015, 10:00 am** — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

**December 5 or 12, 2015** — The date and nature of the December meeting is to be announced.

President Dawn Taylor called the meeting to order at 10:00 am in the meeting room of the Liberty library. There were 12 members attending.

The minutes from the February 14, 2015, meeting were approved. A motion was made by Sam King and seconded by Nelson Dawson. The motion carried.

President Report: Plans for Heritage Day were discussed. The society will set up as in years at the LRS. Event will run from 10:00 am until 5:00 pm on May 2, 2015. Jim Baker is planning to bring a tent; more discussion on this will be held at the April meeting. and do living history.

Vice President Report: No report. Nancy Martin is doing better.

Secretary Report: No report.

Treasurer Report: Treasurer Gay Blalock reported we have paid all Battle of Liberty expenses and have \$10,118.14 as balance on hand. Nelson Dawson made a motion to approve the report; Mary Ann Gerhardt sec-

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You may contact this editor at:  
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**1737 Bridgers Drive**  
**Raymond, MS 39154**  
Or by e-mail at  
**sitemanager@achgs.org**

ended. The report was approved by unanimous vote.

#### COMMITTEES:

Nominating Committee: Linda Lea is chair of this committee. Work needs to begin on the slate of candidates for the new year.

Little Red School House: Greg Barron reported that two visitors doing genealogy research visited in the last month.

Find-a-Grave: George Bragg has been doing an excellent job posting ACHGS photos to this web site.

Old Business: Joey Wall suggested that a pool of photos be made of photos from the Battle of Liberty observance on November 8, 2014, by collecting the photos from all members who took them. The photos could then be put on a DVD for those who would like a copy.

New Business: There was additional discussion of whether there was interest in having a spring field trip to Jackson to tour both the newly renovated New Capitol and the Old Capitol. Any trip would be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> weekend in April.

#### Other Business:

James Allen Causey stated that the new county redistricting maps have a variety of good information on them. Nelson Dawson and Greg Barron offered additional discussion on redistricting of Amite

County.

Clean up of the first floor and grounds around the LRSH will be done following the meeting. The second floor was cleaned on Friday, March 13, 2015, by Gay Blalock and Joanna Hearn.

David Dryer brought in a copy of **Country Roads** magazine and discussed some events mentioned in the magazine that are happening in the Amite County area.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 am.

***[Thanks to President Dawn Taylor for providing the meeting notes that enabled creation of these minutes.]***

### **Family Reunion Announcements**

The 3rd Annual Duck/Oakes Family Reunion will be held on Saturday, April 18, 2015, at Percy Quin State Park. Very little contact information was provided in the e-mail announcement. The announcement was sent originally by Beverly from e-mail address thestuckeyes78@bellsouth.net with no phone or postal address provided.

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The 52nd Honea—Anderson Family Reunion will be held Sunday, May 17, 2015, at Glading Baptist Church. Family members are invited to arrive for church services at 10:30 am. A pot luck luncheon will be held in the pavilion following the service (at about noon). Each attending family should bring a dish suitable to serve several people. The reunion activities will run until about 3:30 pm. Family members with Facebook accounts may wish to visit, and possibly join, the Honea-Anderson Connection and/or the Honea-Anderson Reunion Project Facebook groups. For more reunion information, e-mail to:  
Gladys\_white@aol.com.

# **BITS AND PIECES OF AMITE COUNTY HISTORY**

## **The 1935 Gloster Tornado**

On April 6, 1935, at about 10:20 pm, a tornado tore through the town of Gloster resulting in 9 deaths, 87 homes destroyed, 69 homes damaged and moderate to severe damage caused to most of the commercial buildings and other structures. As with many such events, various accounts differ slightly in details. Some accounts state that eight died, others state ten; however, nine seems to be the "official" number.

The following is a newspaper report of the storm that appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Times Picayune*, and other newspapers. I have attempted to recreate the relative type size of the headline hierarchy and articles text without sacrificing readability.

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## **Tornadoes Ravage South; 26 Killed and 150 Injured**

### **Storms Wreck Town and Visit Death on Two Other Places in Mississippi — Nine Lost as Houseboat Upsets in Louisiana**

McCOMB, Miss., April 7 —Spring tornadoes, tracing an erratic pattern of death and destruction through Louisiana and Mississippi, left at least twenty-six dead and about 150 injured tonight. Mississippi bore the brunt of the storms, which swept up the lower valley country yesterday and last night. Nine were reported drowned when wind-lashed waters overturned a houseboat near Lake Providence, La.

In the little town of Gloster, where eight were reported killed, half the population of 1,500 was affected. Mayor Lewis Kahn said 156 homes were demolished, sixty nine damaged and twenty stores wrecked. The lighting and water systems were wrecked and communication lines blown down.

At Gillsburg, in the same section of Mississippi, six were reported killed. Three others met death at Dolorosa plantation near by.

Gloster got its water from railway storage tanks, and hundreds of homeless were housed in box cars and in the City Hall. Rescue parties hunted the wreckage by lamp light for dead and injured. Mayor Kahn estimated the damage at \$250,000. At Gloster, a path of battered debris which stretched for a mile marked the path of the storm. Huge oak trees were uprooted. Galvanized iron roofing was torn from houses and twisted on trees and poles.

Hail preceded the tornado, which residents said they saw coming as a "black cloud." A Civilian Conservation camp near by sent 100 men into the section about midnight to help. Emergency Relief Administration workers also assisted. Relief work was directed by Mrs. Marguerite Bishop of Hattiesburg, Miss., Red Cross field director. An emergency soup kitchen was set up and hundreds were fed.

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Rescue crews also took up the hunt for the bodies of the nine persons believed drowned in the houseboat accident which occurred at a logging camp six miles from Lake Providence, La.

The storm struck at Gloster about 10:20 P . M., wrecked buildings in a wide path and tore down power and communication lines. Thunder showers and hail followed the wind. Mayor Kahn organized searching parties which went about in the darkness with lamps digging for dead and injured in the debris.

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Editor's note: In my research, I have been unable to find a complete list of all nine who died on April 6; however Dawn Taylor found a very age-yellowed clipping of obituaries of six of the deceased. The six were:

J. H. Coban  
Mrs. J. H. Coban  
Thomas L. Whittington  
Mrs. Jennie McNeely  
Mrs. Chester Allen  
Rev. J. N. Brown

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For any of our members who may not be as familiar with Gloster as with other parts of Amite County, here is a brief description that can be found in several geographic place identifiers on the internet. Note that the tornado is included as one of the formative influences on the town:

“Gloster was created as a municipality by the state legislature on March 12, 1884. Gloster City, as it was first known, was named in honor of Captain Arthur Willis Gloster. A Tennessee native Gloster was a former Confederate officer and chief engineer in charge of the construction of the LN&T Railroad from New Orleans to Memphis. With a population of 2,000, Gloster's economy in 1900 was based on cotton (with six gins) and lumber. The town boasted telegraphy, express, telephones, water works, electricity, two hotels and two banks. A tornado in 1935 destroyed half of Gloster, but the citizens quickly built the town back. Gloster's present population is approximately 1,787, and its economy is based primarily on wood industries, farming and cattle.”

*Borrowed from the Gloster description on the web site [http://www.americantowns.com/ms/gloster/organization/gloster\\_library](http://www.americantowns.com/ms/gloster/organization/gloster_library)*

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To close out this commemoration of the eightieth anniversary of the Gloster tornado, I offer this song/lyric which was based on my mother's recollections of the event as observed from her home SE of Gloster on the Berwick-Cassels Road.

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The Day the Wind Came  
© 2006 Wayne Anderson

My mama she was 13 the day she saw the storm  
As black as the heart of hell, a cloud bringing harm  
She was to the southeast, the safe side from the blow  
Straight on to Gloster, the black cloud was to go.

*Chorus:*

It was the day the wind came / A twisting whirling wind  
It rattled all the windows / Lifted roofs of tin  
It tore apart the houses / Strewed them near and far  
Across the town of Gloster / It left a gaping scar.

My mama said the noise was fierce, a roaring, growling sound  
She feared they all would die that day when the storm came `round  
But she and all her family were safe out on their farm  
The shroud of deadly darkness to them caused no harm.

*Chorus*

But in the town of Gloster the storm winds had their way  
And took the lives of nine strong souls on that deadly day.  
Near ten times that number of homes were rudely razed  
And almost as many damaged among the awesome maze.

*Chorus*

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If members have information they would like to contribute, please feel free to offer it by contacting me at one of the addresses shown in the box on page 2. I will not be able to accept/use just anything submitted. If information is sent by e-mail, it must be in the body of the message, in a *MS Word* document, or in a PDF document. If images of documents are sent they must be in JPG format so that I can attempt to convert them to text via an optical character reading application. If information is sent by postal mail, it should be in typewritten text, not handwritten, and should be a copy that doesn't have to be returned. Since about half our members receive the newsletter by print copy and the copying process will not adequately display photos, I cannot illustrate text write-ups. If photos are sent, do so only by electronic files in JPG format but don't assume the photos will appear in the newsletter. Photos sent in this manner may sometimes be put on the society's Facebook group page if they are likely to have wide appeal. I realize these criteria may prevent the sharing of some information; however, I must place some limits on the amount of time I devote to the newsletter each month since I have other projects including another monthly newsletter that I work on periodically.

**Annual Membership Contribution**  
**Amite County Historical and Genealogical Society**  
**PO Box 2**  
**Liberty, MS 39645**

**Check or circle choice**

- \$15.00 – Individual    \$25.00 – Family    \$50.00 – Sponsor or Ancestor Memorial  
 \$200.00 – Lifetime    \$10.00 – Student (under 18)    \$10.00 – Senior (over 65)

All contributions are tax-deductible.

Please make checks or money orders payable to **Amite Co. Historical and Genealogical Society**.

**(Please print)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone(s): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for joining the Amite County Historical and Genealogical Society. Your contribution helps us continue to collect and preserve historic treasures from Amite County's past, as well as to promote family history. Membership also provides an opportunity to attend programs and participate in special events.

I am interested in helping with:

- Archives    Membership    Programs    Newsletter    Other (specify):

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