



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

May 2015 Vol. 11, No. 5

Without a past, there is no future

Next meeting:

There will be a very brief business meeting between 9:00 and 10:00 am on May 2, 2015, in the conference room of the Liberty Library to take up the finalization of nominations for the election of officers for the next fiscal year. Heritage Day activities will follow at 10:00 am.

AMITE COUNTY HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Minutes of the April 11, 2015 meeting

DRAFT

President Dawn Taylor called the meeting to order at 10:16 am in the meeting room of the Liberty library. There were 15 members attending. Greg Barron gave the invocation.

The minutes from the March 14, 2015, meeting were approved. A motion was made by Sam King and seconded by Greg Barron. The motion carried.

President Report:

Heritage Day is May 2, 2015. The society will be on the green area next to the LRSH. Mrs Phares will have her genealogical information in the LRSH for visitors to look at. The society will have no exhibits or merchandise in the Library Conference Room but we will have it reserved so that we may have a brief business meeting prior to officially beginning Heritage Day and so that members can access the library bathrooms. If anyone brings food or drink, it will also be kept there.

The society needs to move out all the merchandise remaining from the Battle of Liberty event and from the calendar sales. Calendars will be marked down to \$4.00 each. Some child-size T-shirts as well as a few adult medium and adult very large sizes remain from Nov. 8.

Nominations for officers for the next fiscal year need to be finalized so that they can be officially adopted for the ballot at the Heritage

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Future Meeting Schedule

May 2, 2015, 10:00 am — Participation in Liberty Heritage Day activities.

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.

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Day meeting. If you have a nomination to make, please contact Linda Lea, chair of the Nominating Committee or be present for the brief meeting on May 2.

Vice President Report: No report.

Secretary Report: No report.

Treasurer Report: Treasurer Gay Blalock reported we have \$10,228.94 as balance on hand. Sam King made a motion to approve the report; Nelson Dawson seconded. The report was approved by unanimous vote.

COMMITTEES:

Nominating Committee: See President's report.

Little Red School House: Greg Barron reported that the LRSB had several visitors in the last month. He described an issue arising from a visitor doing research for reasons other than just genealogical purposes. Many of the family names he sought were not Amite Co. families. He requested that a large volume of copying from the LRSB files be done for him. Due to the difficulties associated with copying large batches of paperwork on our slow copier, the time otherwise needed to do such jobs, and the possible issue of a requester wanting a legal certification of accuracy on the records copied (such as was being pursued by this recent visitor), it has been decided that we will not accommodate request for large numbers of copies. A questioner raised the issue of whether our current charge per page for copying is sufficient to cover the cost to the society for offering this service. Following some discussion from which it was concluded from the consensus

of the attendees that the per page charge for copying should be increased to \$0.25 per page from \$0.15.

Old Business: The field trip to Jackson to tour the old and new capitol buildings has had to be postponed due to conflicts at the new capitol building. A substitute trip locally is planned for those interested. The April 25 trip will include a tour of the Gardner home (later referred to as the Parker home), a catered lunch at the Fellowship Hall of East Fork Baptist Church, and a tour of an antebellum house near Magnolia that is currently undergoing restoration. This tour is for paying members in good standing only.

New Business: There will be a Confederate Memorial Service at the Confederate Cemetery on Marston St. in Clinton, LA, on April 26, 2015, at 4:30 pm. If you attend and are unable to stand for a half to one hour, please bring a lawn chair. Dewey DeLee will host a supper at his home in Clinton following the service.

Other Business:

Sam King has a donation from Mrs. Bess Simmons of a hand-drawn map of the Shady Grove Community. He also has obtained a memorial plaque that originally was displayed in the Crosby Methodist Church that has small plates on it giving the name of World War II soldiers. Some of the plates have fallen off and Sam has given it to Virgil Roberts who will be working to try to discern what names are missing.

President Dawn Taylor reported that George Bragg has asked if there is a Hurricane Creek in Amite County that could have lent its name to the Hurricane Creek Cemetery.

Mary Ann Gerhardt brought a copy of the *Enterprise-Journal* newspaper that featured a photo of James Allen Causey and Mr. Blue Forman celebrating Mr. Forman's 90th birthday, Mrs. Forman's 87th birthday, and their 66th wedding anniversary.

The meeting adjourned at 11:42 am.

Remember that Heritage Day is May 2, 2015, the **FIRST** Saturday of May. There will be no society meeting on the second Saturday.

BITS AND PIECES OF AMITE COUNTY HISTORY

This month's "bits and pieces" feature draws from the WPA books on Amite County. For anyone not familiar with the WPA and its work products, such as these books on Amite County, a brief explanation follows:

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, unemployment was at an all-time high so the federal government, under the umbrella of the New Deal, created programs to provide employment in activities done in conjunction with state and local governments. One of these was the Works Progress Administration (renamed in 1939 to Works Projects Administration). At the WPA's height in 1938, it employed over 3 million people. During the late 1930s, the WPA was engaged in creating histories of all 82 Mississippi counties, with each county being published in a separate book. The history covered was comprehensive including both natural and anthropological information. Much of the anthropological information was obtained by interviewing older residents of the county.

It should be noted that I have attempted to reproduce the text of the WPA book as closely as possible, including any errors in grammar, sentence structure, and spelling. Also, keep in mind that since this was done in the 1930s, terminology and identifiers as to race are not those in use today.

From Section VII, Social Customs, "log-rolling" was discussed, beginning on page 185:

LOG-ROLLING was explained by Nannie Caston (colored) in a very definite way when she said: "A log-rolling was just a proposition of folks calling in neighbors to help roll logs."

For several days prior to the log-rolling the men folk of the family worked getting the logs ready; that is, they chopped them into short lengths for rolling and piling. Handsticks of dogwood and white oak, about six or eight feet long, were used, and the men would either roll the long or lift them on the handsticks and carry them to the log heaps. The sticks were slipped under the logs, a man at each end of the stick, and it took twelve men to carry a log. The men vied with one another as to which could lift the heaviest load.

The neighboring women assisted the hostess in preparing for the mid-day feast, which was a feast, indeed—the table fairly groaned under its load. The women served, while the men set and ate. A colloquialism was that "the one who had not worked as hard as the others could not have as much to eat."

Mrs. Sarah Thompson, of Gloster, contributed the following:

"My husband and I were married more than fifty years ago, and he had bought land from father which still had brush and small trees, the large trees were cut and chopped into lengths to roll. They did not sell them for saw logs as they do now, but rolled them into piles

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and burned them. Some were deadened and left standing the first year the ground was worked; each fall and winter some of these would fall, so that it was necessary to have a long-rolling each year. Husband made the hand-sticks of young saplings—either dogwood, white oak, or hickory.

"He usually killed a hog a few days before the log-rolling, so that we could have plenty of fresh meat. I always cooked cakes and pies the day before, and it seemed to me that the men and boys enjoyed going to help where they were given plenty of good things to eat. The white men usually ate in the dining room, and we always prepared a table in the yard for the colored folks. If they worked late, we had supper them.

"When I was a young girl I went with my mother to several quiltings, which were given the same day of the log-rolling."

J. S. Barron, of Smithdale, described log-rollings that he has attended: "They always had plenty to drink, plenty of logs to roll; they would work all day and dance all night. The hand-sticks were made of hickory, ash, and dogwood, and young trees were used.

"House-raisings and house coverings were common too, " he said. "We would get everything ready and invite the neighbors to come for the day and help raise the house, as many of them were built of logs and help was needed to put the logs up.

"We always had a fine dinner prepared for the workers, which they always enjoyed, and were willing to help with work when called on."

Log-rollings were the occasion for much fun and merriment, and always there were women and girls present to add to the enjoyment of the occasion.

From Section VII, Social Customs, "fish fries" were discussed, beginning on page 187:

FISH FRYS (sic) used to be prevalent, but today a social of that nature would be rare.

Mrs. Sarah Thompson, since deceased, said that when she was you her stepfather owned a cotton-gin and grist-mill run by water power, and in the spring and summer the people of the community gathered there for fish frys.

The men, after setting the fish nets, would let down the water gates at the mill and catch fish enough for all. An old colored woman prepared the fish for frying, and she, Grandma Toler, and several of the older women would fry them. Old time fireplace frying pans with legs were used.

There was fiddling music and the young folks danced on a nearby platform while the fish were being fried. All join in the feast. In the afternoon, the old folks sat around and chat-

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ted, and more dancing was indulged in by the young folks.

Ellen Martin (colored), of Gloster, was asked if she remembered fish fries in her younger day. "Fish fries, dey had 'em ever year on Marse Burton Bates's place. You know he had a water-mill down on de river below town, and when dey wanted to have a fish fry, dey would raise de gates an' fry 'em fight dar. Folks made plenty of lard in dem days, dey made it by de Darrel, so we didn't have to be sparin' wid it. De fish were fried in old time fireplace skillet, an' de best bread an' biscuits I ever et was cooked in 'em on de fireplace."

She was then asked what the young folks were doing while the fish were being fried, and she replied, "Dey was dancing, dey all had big times den."

From Section VII, Social Customs, "parties" were discussed on page 188:

Not so many years ago PARTIES were very much in vogue, and invitations, if given, were by word of mouth. Country parties are referred to, and this was in the day before cars were used, when horses and buggies were the means of travel. When word was noised about that party was being give, in spite of slow transportation, the house, galleries, and sometimes the yard would be full of young people, and horses and mules would be hitched all over the "stomp."

Games, such as "We're Marching Round the Levee," "Kitchen Furniture," "Skip to my Lou," "Snap," and many others were played, many to the tune of the French harp, with sometimes the fiddle and guitar.

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):

**Amite County Historical and
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