



## Amite County Historical and Genealogical Society

Dawn Taylor, President

Wayne B. Anderson, Secretary

William G. Barron, Vice Pres.

N. Gay Blalock, Treasurer

Allen Terrell, Council-at-large

Wayne B. Anderson — Newsletter Editor

October 2016

Vol. 12, No. 10

Without a past, there is no future

### Next meeting:

The next meeting will be a regular business meeting at 10:00 am on October 8, 2016, in the conference room of the Liberty Library. A program on arrowheads and how they're made will be presented by Ronnie Johnston following the business meeting (see page 2)..

### Future Meeting Schedule

**October 8, 2016** — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

**November 12, 2016** — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS with field trip to Amite Co. cemeteries to map and photograph them.

**December 3, 2016** — Annual Open House. Details to be announced.

**January 14, 2017** — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

**February 11, 2017** — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS. Filed trip to grave of Col. Thomas Hinds in Jefferson Co. following meeting.

**March 11, 2017** — Field trip to New Orleans to visit Chalmette Battlefield and other sites.

**April 8, 2017** — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

**May 6, 2017** — Heritage Day. Society activities to be announced. No regular meeting.

**June 10, 2017** — Annual meeting with election of officers in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

**July 2017** — No meeting.

### AMITE COUNTY HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

**DRAFT**

President Dawn Taylor called the meeting to order at 10:10 am in the meeting room of the Liberty library. There were 19 members attending. Bert Blalock gave the invocation.

The minutes of the June 11, 2016, meeting were taken up for approval. A motion to approve was made by Greg Barron and seconded by Allen Terrell. The motion carried

#### President Report:

Work is continuing on cataloging the LRSB book collection. Any borrowed books need to be returned by October 8<sup>th</sup> meeting so that the process can be completed. There will be a suspension on checking out materials until this is completed.

Scanning of Amite County School Attendance records was begun over the summer. The Liberty Rosenwald School is to be the first one scanned. The plan is to scan these and make them available to researchers probably online. It is a very slow process but well worth the effort as the records give not only the child's name and grade but the parents and their address at the time the children were attending the school. A photo of the school has been located with First University and a request for a good copy of the photo is being made.

Research requests have been received from Kathleen Phillips for info on the Jabez William Butler family and from Seth Perry, professor at Princeton University, concerning Lorenzo Dow.

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Anyone wishing to share information or to work on gathering new information on these projects will be put in touch with the principal researchers.

The Bethany book compiled by Frances Phares has been reprinted.

Vice President Report: VP Barron reported the following field trip and event plans:

Travel plans for the November Field trip to visit three cemeteries in Amite county including a slave cemetery are in the works. We plan to map and photograph the cemeteries while there.

The February meeting will be the trip to General Hind's grave in Jefferson county

The March meeting will be the trip to the Chalmette Battlefield to see where Hinds Dragoons jumped over the British Troops. There will be other interesting stops on the trip. We plan to take a bus and more details will be finalized by the October or November meetings. We will be inviting the SW Genealogy Society and the Stockdale Rangers to join us on this trip.

Secretary Report: None, Secretary Wayne Anderson was not present.

Treasurer Report: Treasurer Gay Blalock gave the Treasurer's report. The current account balance for the society is \$13,015.45. It was unclear who made the motion to approve the Treasurer's report and who seconded. The motion carried.

A motion to accept the Executive reports was made by Greg Barron and seconded by Many Ann Gerhardt. The motion carried.

COMMITTEES: Summer visitors included several from the Blalock Family Reunion.

Old Business: None

New Business: The people of Crosby were severely impacted by the August flooding but are not receiving FEMA dollars to assist in their recovery. The Executive Board has issued a challenge to the membership and the Facebook Group page members to each donate at least \$5 to the Crosby Cause to help our friends and

neighbors in Crosby with cash. This challenge will remain open until the Open House and we will make a presentation of the funds prior to the Christmas Holidays. We have contacts with Operation Restore Crosby that will assist us in getting the funds into the proper hands. A link will be provided on the Facebook page to a PayPal account where donations can be made. Checks can be sent to ACHGS with Crosby Fund in the memo space on the check. The preference is to use the PayPal link. Our goal is to raise \$6500 (1293 Facebook group members x \$5 is \$6465 and surely we can make that a nice round number with donations from members not on the Facebook group). Progress will be kept up to date on the FB page and in the newsletter.

Other Business: None

The meeting was adjourned to the program. Author Chris Watts and co-author Greg Price presented a program on their research on the War of Northern Aggression in Marion County and how they came to write "The Great Sweet Potato Raid" These raiders were of the same group that raided Liberty. The Society purchased a copy of the work and it will be available for loan to Members after the new cataloging system is in place. Nine members were treated to lunch at the Dinner Bell Restaurant in McComb.

### **October Program—Arrowheads**

Executive Committee Member Allen Terrell arranged the program for October. He writes: "The speaker will be Ronnie Johnston. He lives in Busy Corner and has lived there all his life. His a musician, painter, carver, and an all-around artist. He is the son of Robert and Opal Johnston. He will speak to us about flint knapping and I believe he also plans to do a demonstration. ...he not only flint knaps but also makes guitars (large and miniature). He is a big arrowhead collector in addition to the ones he makes. He finds many along the banks of Brushy Creek in Amite County."

You may contact this editor at:

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**1737 Bridgers Drive**

**Raymond, MS 39154**

Or by e-mail at [sitemanager@achgs.org](mailto:sitemanager@achgs.org)

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

Since it is October with another Halloween approaching, I decided to offer a somewhat spooky Amite County story this month. This story was passed to me by my father and I have tried to keep it as true to his original telling of it as my memory permits. I did apply some poetic license and embellishment of the story in a song I wrote about this some time ago but space won't allow presenting that lyric here.

### **The Old Man Who Never Trusted Anyone**

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My Grandfather Myers Anderson resided and farmed near Glading in eastern Amite County. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century many of the new conveniences liker electricity, telephones, automobiles, and indoor plumbing had not made it to the rural areas and rural households were still living in a style much like that of their ancestors.

...

Near to my Grandparents farm, there lived an old man who had long since gotten too old to actively farm and spent most of his time when weather permitted tending his garden, chopping a bit of firewood or stovewood, and tending to his milk cow. When the weather was warm but rainy, he could be seen whiling away his time on his front porch watching the rain drip from the overhang.

He had been rather successful in his younger years and apparently had sufficient money laid away to meet his meager needs and would often ask neighbors to buy him flour, salt, or other staples when they visited the store. He never left his place and had remarked on more than one occasion that he didn't trust banks and didn't want to have to go to town to get to his money; consequently, everyone presumed that whatever money he had saved up was hidden somewhere in or near his house.

Whether he had ever married or had any children was never related to me in the telling of the story; however, no one knew of him having any living relatives

My Grandfather on occasion would ride past (on his horse or in his wagon) and see the old man puttering about the garden or sitting on the porch. They always exchanged a wave of recognition, though seldom did the old man motion for a visit.

In the course of time as it will be with us all, the old man passed away. He was discovered by a passerby who noticed that he was not out on a day when he would have usually been. Since he had no local kin, the neighbors helped arrange for his burial with the county paying for the casket and grave-digging out of an expense fund usually spent for what in that era was called a pauper's funeral.

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The county attorney set about to find if the old man had any living heirs to his property. After a diligent search and public notice of intent to probate the estate, no one stepped forward to claim the inheritance. Subsequently, the county was given the property for disposal to recover the cost of the pauper's funeral and the probate search.

There were no willing buyers for some time and the old man's house remained empty and unused, although quite a number of the more curious types would occasionally visit the house and poke about looking for the old man's hidden money. Like most legends, the more it was talked about, the larger the old man's hidden "fortune" became. This drew in more treasure hunters who began to vandalize parts of the house, ripping up floor and wall boards they thought looked "suspicious," trying to find his cache.

The county became concerned that the value of the property, which mostly lay in the house itself, would be severely reduced and become even less salable, so they made an all out push to sell the property and arranging with the bank to assist in floating a loan to a possible buyer.

While all this was going on with the house still vacant, my Grandfather had occasion to ride by the house one cool and rainy day. As he passed the house, he naturally glanced up at the porch as he had done many times before. Lo and behold, the old man was sitting in his rocker on the porch and threw up his hand. My Grandfather began to wave back and then realized that he shouldn't be seeing what he was seeing. As he passed, a tree blocked his view momentarily and when he moved further on, he saw that the porch was empty with no one visible anywhere. He was a bit spooked by what he had seen but decided it was just a case of thinking he saw the old man because of the memory of having seen him many times before.

Finally the county managed to broker a deal to sell the house to a family that lived a couple of miles away but was looking for a slightly larger house and acreage. They moved into the house shortly thereafter.

Various visitors to the family in their new home asked if they had ever found any sign of whether the old man had really hidden money around the place and they said that they'd found nothing but the damage caused by the treasure hunters.

In the course of time another cool, rainy day arrived that prevented doing outside work and the man in the family decided to do a few hand-work chores out on the porch. The family had erected a small picket fence with a gate in front of the house to set off the yard from the "driveway" that connected to the road. As the man worked on the porch, something caught his eye just outside the fence. He looked up and there stood the old man looking intently at the house. As soon as the man focused on the old him, the old man turned, walked through the gate, went diagonally across the yard and disappeared around the corner of the house on the side where the chimney stood. The man on the porch dropped his handwork project and tore around to the end of the porch to look around the corner. When he looked though, no one was visible. He ended up walking completely around the house in the misty rain to see if there was any sign of anyone having walked there and found nothing.

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Later the man related his experience to my Grandfather and only then did my Grandfather tell anyone about what he had seen on a similar day earlier. They came to the conclusion that the old man apparently did leave something behind that, even in death, he was still trying to keep secure.

It is your choice to believe this story or not, but my Grandfather believed he had seen a ghost that one time.

### **Crosby Flood Relief Donation Challenge**

The heavy rainfall in early August caused flood damage to many residences in and near the town of Crosby. FEMA relief has not been forthcoming and residents are dealing with the damage themselves. To provide a slight bit of help to our Crosby neighbors, the Executive Committee has issued a challenge to all society members and to the Facebook group members to donate at least \$5.00 to the "Crosby Cause."

This challenge will remain open through the December Open House and the society will make a presentation of the funds prior to the Christmas holidays. We have contacts with Operation Restore Crosby that will assist us in getting the funds into the proper hands. A link will be provided on the Facebook page to a PayPal account where donations can be made. Checks can be sent to the ACHGS at PO Box 2, Liberty, MS 39645 with "Crosby Fund" noted in the memo space on the check. The preference is to use the PayPal link. Our goal is to raise at least \$6500. Updates will be posted on the FB page and in the newsletter.

**HELP OUR CROSBY NEIGHBORS  
DONATE AT LEAST \$5 TODAY!**

### **Contributions**

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.

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**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      ( ) \$150 -- Lifetime, couple 70+ age      ( ) \$100 - Lifetime, 70+ individual  
 ( ) \$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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Liberty, MS 39645**