



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

November 2016

Vol. 12, No. 11

Without a past, there is no future

Next meeting:

The next meeting will be a regular business meeting at 10:00 am on November 12, 2016, in the conference room of the Liberty Library. A field trip to record information on three cemeteries will follow the meeting.

Future Meeting Schedule

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. Field 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.

August 12, 2017 — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

AMITE COUNTY HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

DRAFT

Due to the needs of the speaker presenting the program at the close of the business meeting, the meeting was held outside in front of the Little Red Schoolhouse. President Dawn Taylor called the meeting to order at 10:13 am. There were 21 Attendees. Greg Barron gave the invocation.

The minutes of the September 10, 2016, meeting were taken up for approval. A motion to approve was made by Allen Terrell and seconded by Greg Barron. The motion carried.

President Report: President Dawn Taylor had only one item. She urged all who could to attend the memorial service on October 17 for Pfc. James Samuel Smith whose remains were only recently recovered from a burial site in the Pacific where he was interred after falling in the battle of Tarawa.

Vice President Report: VP Barron reminded the group that there will be a field trip following the November 12 meeting to photograph and otherwise record information on three cemeteries in Amite County.

Secretary Report: None,

Treasurer Report: Treasurer Gay Blalock gave the Treasurer's report. The current account balance for the society is \$12,952.10. Greg Barron made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report and Allen Terrell seconded. The motion passed.

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COMMITTEES: The Open House planning committee is seeking suggestions on possible locations that could be used for the Open House event.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Other Business: None

Announcements: Pres. Dawn Taylor announced that Greg Barron was celebrating his 60th birthday. She then presented him with a birthday cake.

The meeting was adjourned to the program. Allen Terrell introduced Ronnie Johnston, musician and artist, who presented a brief program on the making of flint points that were used by Native Americans as tips for arrows and spears. He also showed a variety of points he has collected, some are found artifacts while others were made by Mr. Johnston.

Reminder: Crosby Flood Relief

The drive to raise money to help the victims of the August flooding in Crosby is continuing.

This drive 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.

Give 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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Reference:

[Http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml](http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml)

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BITS AND PIECES OF AMITE COUNTY HISTORY

This month's column comes from Mrs. Frances Phares who gleaned this from the Betty Lou Cain papers. Although the article references events in and around Clinton, LA, the "around" definitely includes Amite County. Since this has been transcribed multiple times, there are some grammar and punctuation errors or anomalies that I've not attempted to correct.

WAR TIMES IN AND AROUND CLINTON, LA

The first major war after the founding of Clinton to have any great effect on the people was the Civil War, 1861-1865. An interesting article about the effect of this war on Clinton appeared in the "Louisiana Historical Quarterly, 1930, Vol. XXII, pages 64-66 by Annie Sanderson, (Mrs. Charles Kilbourne). This is quoted in full, as follows:

"Why is there such glamour over distant battle grounds? It is generally considered a rare privilege to be able to visit such historical spots, and one feels almost as if one were treading on holy ground. The scenes of strife, in many instances, are in foreign fields, the participants known to us, solely, through mazy history, and the casus belli anything but a laudable one, yet, we experience a sensation of awe and reverence. It is incomprehensible, in the face of the knowledge that we, of Clinton, Louisiana, walk, ride, or drive, almost daily, over soil hallowed by the blood of our own countrymen, yea, of our own relatives, mayhap patriotic blood shed in defense of our loved Southland. Why is it, that we experience no thrill, inspiration of reverence, from contact with these historic places? No great battles were fought here it is true, but the combatants were actuated by the same patriotic ardor and spirit as well as those of Shiloh and Gettysburg--all fought for the same noble cause. Possibly, it is, because, we, of a later generation, are not sufficiently informed in regard to the points of special interest. They are in our midst, however, if we would only seek them.

"The old Confederate camp was at the northern limit of what is now Church Street on the vacant lots opposite Mr. Jno. A. White's residence. The scenes of strife were on the southern and southwestern outskirts of the town, mainly in August, 1862, Gen. Lee and Col. Scott had an encounter at the Cross Roads, on the Baton Rouge Road, in sight of the old Monahan house, Gen. Lee was in command of two thousand Union soldiers, some of whom were convicts from the Baton Rouge Penitentiary. Col. Scott had about five hundred men at his command. Under such circumstances, it was not surprising that Gen. Lee should be victorious. The Monahan house was saved from destruction, by a masonic sign made by the lady of the house, and recognized and respected by the officer in command of the enemy. Gen. Lee pushed on to Clinton, where he spent ten days and nights. As a result of the visit, the depot was destroyed, and, also, the factory building which was in process of erection on Liberty St., near Fair Grounds. Much private property was destroyed, and the seal and regalia were stolen from the Masonic Hall. Lee then retired to Baton Rouge.

"Port Hudson surrendered in July, 1863, after which stragglers were constantly passing through Clinton. Grier-son's raid followed in August of the same year. Col. Fred Ogden was in command of the Confederate forces, and the scene of their engagement was on the Jackson Road just beyond Pretty Creek, in what is known as the Gurney field. Previous to their encounter, a Methodist Divine and his small nephew, driving a team, composed of a fine Kentucky horse and a small sorrel pony, passed over that road. When about two miles out they met a detachment of the enemy. The latter were delighted with the horse, and, declaring that a sorrel pony that one of their company was riding would make an excellent match for the pony driven by the Minister, proceeded to exchange it for the horse, despite the protests and pleadings of the reverend gentleman. Their commanding officer, Col. French, appeared very opportunely and restored the horse to his rightful owner. The minister and his small companion were, then, allowed to pursue their journey in peace. The Union soldiers were repulsed on that occasion, and they did not succeed in crossing the creek to the town. However, the old house, west of the Creek, now owned by the Kilbournes, and several buildings in Clinton, still bear marks of their shot and shell. Skirmishing continued from that time until the close of the war.

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"The hospitable home of the patriotic Richerts near the Methodist church, was the refuge of many weary, footsore and well-nigh starved soldiers during that stormy period. Silliman Institute and the old Masonic Hall were used as hospitals in those days. It is difficult to imagine our reposeful little town of Clinton in the throes of terror and bloodshed. In striking contrast to its present calls, was the reveille in the early dawn, and the recurrent intervals of warfare with their rattle of musketry punctuated by the boom of the cannon. The only warfare now waged at the Cross Roads is of a mercantile and agriculture character and the only fusillade of firearms now heard in the Gurney field is aimed at the inoffensive snips, that feed on the marshes. Day-dawn is no longer announced by the warlike revile, but by the more peaceful, though shriller call to work of the factories.

"At Silliman Institute, instead of the groans of the wounded and dying, is heard the hum of study and the merry laughter of charming girlhood. The old, ivy-draped Masonic Hall, once hospital, then academy and later, a factory, has been turned over to the mice and bats, and its silence is undisturbed, unless perchance, the ghost of a departed soldier haunts its empty chambers, and awakes faint echoes during the solemn mid-night hours."

Skirmishes were numerous around Baton Rouge and Port Hudson and many families were affected, too, because sons and husbands had to leave home for the faraway battlefields. Since the cause that the South was fighting was a losing one, things remained troubled for some time after the war was over as the Reconstruction Era was still a time of battle though not fought on the battlefield.

The next contact with major warfare was to become known as World War I which the United States entered in April 1917. The Armistice came on November 11, 1918 and the soldier boys began to come home from overseas duty and from camps across the nation. Quite a number of East Feliciana Parish soldiers were killed in action, and it is in their memory that the East Feliciana Memorial Library was set up. This library operated until 1960 at which time it became a state library under the name of Audubon Regional library, occupying the same space but with another portion of the same building added. In the part that was originally the East Feliciana Memorial Library is a plaque bearing the names of those who lost their lives in the great and terrible war.

Then on December 7, 1941 came Pearl harbor. The United States was suddenly plunged into another great and terrible war which came to be known as World War II. This war probably affected a greater number of people in Clinton than any other prior to that time as the draft boards all across the county quickly shifted into high gear, and practically all of the young men were called to service of one kind or another. First the unmarried young men were drafted, but as the war waged long and furiously, married men with families and older men too were called in to action.

A huge army camp was built nearby at Centreville, Mississippi - Camp Van Dorn. Through necessity, the camp was thrown up practically over night and because of the scarcity of building materials and labor, the town was not able to keep pace as needed in providing housing for soldiers with families. Many came to Clinton to rent houses, apartments, rooms. . . . any space available so that husbands and wives could remain together as long as possible against the uncertainty of the future. Soon, every space was taken with many local people renting rooms as a patriotic gesture. The soldiers were taken by bus to Baton Rouge on the week end since there was little in the immediate area of the camp to occupy them on their time off. Saturday would see busload after busload heading south through Clinton and on Sunday they would roll back northward to resume their duties in the army camp.

As the years go by, it is a tendency or human nature to forget the more unpleasant phases of life and remember the lighter side. Since this is ". . . For Fond Remembrance" we can look back how on some things that were very serious at the time with somewhat of a sense of amusement. Many items were scarce, and as the war got under way and people realized that certain things might be difficult to buy, some began to purchase scarce items in large quantities and hoard these either for later use themselves or for resale at much higher prices. To overcome this, the government established a ration board and everyone was required to register in

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order to obtain a "ration book" - an item which came to be more important in those harried times than a "pocket book" or purses. Some of the things most affected by rationing were meats, sugar, coffee, gas, tires and shoes. Actually enough of all these items for ordinary need was allowed through the use of ration coupons, but it is another phase of human nature that often makes us want most the things we cannot get. Just to know that one could not go to a shoe store and walk out with two new pairs at one time seemed a tough way of life, but few complained because it was plain this was a small sacrifice in comparison with some that were being made by those actively engaged in the war. Who that lived through those days doesn't remember those lemon ice box pies that were made with condensed milk? We scrambled madly to trade our coupons for a can or two of this milk if our grocer were lucky enough to get some in. What woman doesn't remember those thick sagging rayon hose that took the place of our dearly loved sheer nylons? And did you ever stand in line for hours and hours if it were known that a store would have a few nylons for sale that day on a first come first served basis? How important it seemed then but how often now do you buy condensed milk? "Black Market" prices were asked for new cars and snapped up as quick as a wink. None were manufactured for several years as the material and labor was used instead to manufacture jeeps, tanks, airplanes and other tools of the war trade. The popular tunes of the day were the patriotic ones: "God Bless America" "Say A Prayer for the Boys over There," "We'll be Singing Hallelujah Marching Through Berlin," "You're A Sap, Mr. Jap," "The Marine Hymn," "Anchors Away" and many, many others.

"D Day" was June 6, 1944 - the date of the Normandy invasion and many rough months were yet to come. But finally on May 8, 1945 the Germans went down in defeat and the Japanese surrendered on August 14th of the same year. The first of these was called "V-E" day (Victory in Europe) and the last was "V-J" day. The "boys" - many of whom were just that but had proven themselves to be men - began to come back home, only there were many, many who didn't come back. The following local service men were killed in action: William "Buddy" McCutcheon, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sid McCutcheon; Nelson Irwin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sam Irwin; and King Pipes, son of Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Pipes. There were gold stars in many windows throughout our nation to denote that a loved one had died in service to his country.

The sounds of bombing had hardly died down from World War II before we were once again called to battle in Korea in the early 1950's. This never became the all-out-effort with the United States that World War I and World War II had been, but again many lives were lost although none from Clinton.

At the present time, most of the younger men are drafted or volunteer for some form of training in one of the armed services of our country. For some this interrupts college studies but most of them seem to look upon it as one of the normal parts of "growing up".

World situations remain almost constantly tense and war could flare up again, so it helps to promote a feeling of confidence to know that our men are being prepared for such an eventuality. With the introduction of the Atom Bomb near the end of World War II and the various other innovations that have been made, another war would no doubt be more dangerous and affect more people than any previous one. The relations between Cuba and the United States have been extremely tense for some time now, and we in Clinton and the surrounding area had the scare of war brought closer home in October 1962 than had been the case since the Civil War. It is terrible to think of what the fighting men of our country have gone through on the battlefields of Europe and Asia, but it strikes fear in many more hearts to think that our own homes - men, women, and children - might be subject to attack such as was the threat during the Cuban crisis. Some people hastily took the advice that had been given us for several years and began to construct underground fallout shelters. Many more stored up canned goods and bottled water to last for some time should we be attacked. But this crisis passed over, and we hope for a peaceful future.

So Clinton has suffered from each of these wars, but our lot has been easier than that of many people throughout the world, and for this we are thankful.

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)

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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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