



Amite County Historical and Genealogical Society

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Wayne B. Anderson — Newsletter Editor

January 2018

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Without a past, there is no future

Next meeting:

The next meeting will be a regular business meeting at 10:00 am, January 13, 2018, in the Little Red School House.

Following the meeting, interested members may wish to caravan to McComb for lunch prior to travelling on to Holmesville for the Bicentennial observance activities at 2:00 pm. (The cost of lunch or any other purchases is the responsibility of the individual members.)

Future Meeting Schedule

Note: Time and place of regular meetings is 10:00 am in the Little Red School House unless otherwise specified.

January 13, 2018 — Regular monthly meeting.

February 10, 2018 — Regular monthly meeting.

March 10, 2018 — Regular monthly meeting.

April 14, 2018 — Regular monthly meeting.

May 5, 2018 — Heritage Day. Details TBA.

June 9, 2018 — Annual Meeting with election of officers. Regular monthly meeting.

July, 2018 — No meeting unless scheduled by Executive Committee.

August 11, 2018 — Regular monthly meeting.

September 8, 2018 — Regular monthly meeting.

October 13, 2018 — Regular monthly meeting.

November 10, 2018 — Regular monthly meeting.

December 1, 2018 — Annual Open House TBA

AMITE COUNTY HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

In December the annual Open House was held so there are no minutes.

INVITATION

The Amite County Historical and Genealogical Society has been cordially invited by the Stockdale Rangers, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Camp 1681, Summit for a night of fellowship at the Annual Robert E. Lee / Thomas "Stonewall" Jonathan Jackson Banquet, Saturday, January 20, 2018, 6:30 pm at the Tangipahoa Family Life Center, Tangipahoa Baptist Church, Amite County.

DON'T MISS OUT ON THIS EVENT! There will be great food, a speaker and a band that is always good. Come and celebrate your Southern heritage. The meal will be pot luck so bring your best Southern dish and try all the others.

Thank You!

The society extends a heart-felt **THANK YOU** to **Billy Anders** for his donation of the proceeds from the sale of his book Back Home in Amite County at the Open House in December. His donation of over \$700 will be used in the Little Red School House restoration fund.

Thank you!

BITS AND PIECES OF AMITE COUNTY HISTORY

This month we again remember the Battle of New Orleans. For any readers who are not up on their history, the Bing search engine defines the Battle of New Orleans in the following concise manner:

The Battle of New Orleans took place on January 8, 1815 and was the final major battle of the War of 1812. American forces, commanded by Major General Andrew Jackson, defeated an invading British Army intent on seizing New Orleans and the vast territory the United States had acquired with the Louisiana Purchase.

This historic event has significance for Amite Countians because a number of the early settlers volunteered to fight in the volunteer unit put together by Col. Thomas Hinds.

This write-up was taken from the Facebook page of "Defending the Heritage" which focuses on Southern heritage.

"January 8, 1815 - Southerners doing what they always do, defying overwhelming odds only this time to preserve the fledgling Union and with the help of a sizable contingent of Free Black Men; a trend that would repeat itself during the War for Southern Independence over and over again.

"The defeat of British forces, on January 8, 1815, at the Battle of New Orleans by an American army less than half its' size has been credited to many monumental miscalculations and incompetent strategies. One relatively unknown episode about Lt. Ephraim Brank and his heroism atop the breastworks seems to have contributed as much, or more, than any of the generally accepted, well known, reasons for this loss.

"An eyewitness account by a British officer describes, in vivid detail what he and his comrades faced as they led their men toward the twenty foot thick, earth and timber defenses of the Americans.

"We marched in solid column in a direct line, upon the American defenses. I belonged to the staff; and as we watched through our glasses the position of the enemy, with that intensity an officer only feels when marching into the jaws of death. It was a strange sight, that breastwork, with a crowd of beings behind, their heads only visible above the line of defense. We could distinctly see their long rifles lying on the works, and the batteries in our front, with their great mouths gaping toward us. We could also see the position of General Jackson, with his staff around him. But what attracted our attention most, was the figure of a tall man standing on the breastworks, dressed in linsey-woolsey, with buckskin leggings, and a broad-brimmed felt hat that fell round the face, almost concealing the features. He was standing in one of those picturesque, graceful attitudes peculiar to those natural men dwelling in forests. The body rested on the left leg, and swayed with a curved line upward. The right arm was extended, the hand grasping the rifle near the muzzle, the butt of which rested near the toe of his right foot. With the left hand he raised the rim of the hat from his eyes, and seemed gazing intently on our advancing column. The cannon of the enemy had opened on us, and

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tore through our works with dreadful slaughter; but we continued to advance, unwavering and cool as if nothing threatened our progress.

“Our eyes were riveted upon him; at whom had he leveled his piece? But the distance was so great, that we looked at each other and smiled. We saw the rifle flash and very rightly conjectured that his aim was in the direction of our party. My right hand companion, as noble a fellow as ever rode at the head of a regiment, fell from his saddle.

“The hunter paused a few moments without moving his gun from his shoulder. Then he reloaded and assumed his former attitude. Throwing the hat rim over his eyes and again holding it up with the left hand, he fixed his piercing gaze upon us as if hunting out another victim. Once more the hat rim was thrown back, and the gun raised to his shoulder. This time we did not smile, but cast glances at each other to see which of us must die.

“When again the rifle flashed, another one of our party dropped to the earth. There was something most awful in this marching on to certain death. The cannon and thousands of musket balls playing upon our ranks, we cared not for, for there was a chance of escaping them. Most of us had walked as coolly upon batteries more destructive without quailing, but to know that every time that rifle was leveled toward us, and its bullet sprang from the barrel, one of us must surely fall; to see it rest motionless as if poised on a rack, and know, when the hammer came down, that the messenger of death drove unerringly to its goal, to know this, and still march on, was awful. I could see nothing but the tall figure standing on the breastworks; he seemed to grow, phantom-like, higher and higher, assuming, through the smoke, the supernatural appearance of some great spirit of death. Again did he reload and discharge, and reload and discharge his rifle, with the same unfailing aim and the same unfailing result; and it was with indescribable pleasure that I beheld, as we neared the American lines, the sulphurous cloud gathering around us, and shutting that spectral hunter from our gaze.

“We lost the battle; and to my mind, the Kentucky rifle man contributed more to our defeat than anything else; for while he remained in our sight our attention was drawn from our duties; and when, at last, he became enshrouded in the smoke, the work was complete; we were in utter confusion, and unable, in the extremity, to restore order sufficient to make any successful attack - the battle was lost.”

In my judgment the “Kentucky rifle man” characterization of the American soldiers fighting at New Orleans was less a geographic designation of their origin and more of a designation that it was the frontiersmen volunteers that made the difference. It shows that when one daily survival (and that of one’s family) necessitates becoming a superior marksman to keep food on the table, that ability produced soldiers superior to those who developed their marksmanship only to meet the criteria of their military duty.

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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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PO Box 2
Liberty, MS 39645