



Amite County Historical and Genealogical Society

Dawn Taylor, President

William G. Barron, Vice Pres.

Wayne B. Anderson, Secretary

N. Gay Blalock, Treasurer

Allen Terrell, Council-at-large

Wayne B. Anderson — Newsletter Editor

January 2016

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Without a past, there is no future

Next meeting:

The next meeting will be a regular business meeting on January 9, 2016 at 10:00 am in the conference room of the Liberty library.

AMITE COUNTY HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Minutes of the November 14, 2015 meeting

DRAFT

President Dawn Taylor called the meeting to order at 10:06 am in the meeting room of the Liberty library. There were 18 members attending. Greg Barron gave the invocation.

Future Meeting Schedule

January 9, 2016 — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

February 13, 2016 — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

March 12, 2016 — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

April 9, 2016 — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS

May 7, 2016 — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS

June 11, 2016 — Annual meeting with election of officers in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS

July 2016 — Traditionally the society has not met in July. If this should change, appropriate changes will be made in this schedule.

August 13, 2016 — Regularly monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS

September 10, 2016 — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS

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

The draft minutes were taken up. The reference to Douglas Blalock should be changed to Dennis Blalock. A motion to approve the minutes as corrected was made by Linda Lea and seconded by Bert Blalock. The motion carried.

President Report:

President Taylor reported that the "Angels on the Bluff" could not be done in the cemetery as usual due to the heavy rain. The character sketches were done in the Visitor's Center instead.

President Taylor then turned the floor to Gay Blalock who gave details on the society's participation in the "Sawdust and Splinters" event in late October.

Treasurer Report: Treasurer Gay Blalock reported we have \$11,220.32 as balance on hand. Linda Lea made a motion to approve the report; Mary Ann Huff seconded. The report was approved by unanimous vote.

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Vice President Report: The report dealt with the society's Open House plans. Open House will be held at the William Gardner house. The owners will be selling the house contents by a pre-priced tag sale on the day of Open House. VP Barron is planning to make the day an "in-fair" celebration. The society will charge a \$5 admission for each person regardless of age with no admittance before 10:00 am. Members and friends who work the whole 4 hours and provide an ample food dish will be given admission free. Such an event with a sale involved has the potential to draw 300 to 500 visitors. The house has never been opened to the public before and may not ever be again. Additionally, the Stockdale Rangers SCV camp will have a living history encampment, Dub Brock will perform at noon, and there will be fiddle playing and a piper performing at other times. Dewey DeLee will provide decorations inside the house. Greg needs volunteers to provide greenery to create decoration of the front porch. The decorations need to be put up on Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving. Parking will be behind the house with entry below the house; the front of house drive will not be used. Entry to the house will be through the front door only; exit will be through the back door only. Sale of items will be determined by owners, not the society. A motion was made by Kay Pouns Berry to accept the VP Report; Linda Lea seconded. The motion passed without dissent

Secretary Report: No report.

COMMITTEES: No reports

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Other Business: None

Announcements:

VP Barron passed out a batch of 1909 Russian notes, face value 5 Rubles, as a gift to anyone who wanted one. This currency, which has no monetary value today, was the last currency issued under the Czarist regime in Russian.

A reenactment and other activities will be taking place on November 21-22, 2015, at Camp Moore.

Mrs. Frances Phares announced that she has a lengthy compilation of Phares family information. It is in a bound book with copies available for \$25 each.

Mrs. Phares also announced that a guest speaker will provide a program at the February meeting.

David Cate provided comments on his ancestors in SW Mississippi and thanked Mrs. Oma Gordon for her help in the past making copies of his family records at the court house.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 am following approval of a motion to adjourn by Mary Ann Huff and second by Oma Gordon.



BITS AND PIECES OF AMITE COUNTY HISTORY

Southern Chronicles
1996 by Cheryl Romaine

THE CHRONICLE OF A MAN

George A. McGehee

This weeks article is a continuation from the Southern Chronicles in last week's newspaper. If you will remember, I began a personality sketch of a man named, George A. McGehee, who was born in Amite County, was an educator and a religious leader, the son of Mumford McGehee and Sarah Ann Wilkinson McGehee and was born on Jan. 1, 1842 on the Ridley Beall Farm in north central Amite County.

George fought in the Civil War, was wounded at Shiloh and at Corinth, completed his education with honors at the Natchez Institute, then among other things became Superintendent of Education of Amite County for sixteen years.

Last week I told how George compiled a history and roster of Confederate Soldiers of Amite County then went on to tell you about his interesting family life that so richly lived and grew here in our own historic Amite County, and as we return to our story, remember if you will, that George married Miss Josephine Cotton and together they had twelve children and at this particular stage of the story George Addis McGehee's granddaughter, Annie McGehee Simpson relates that she, herself, went to Nunnery School at East Fork for a time but as Annie lived for sometime with Grandpa George and his family, and later lived across the road from them, in a rented house, she relates many of the incidents concerning Sara Frances, known as "Fanny". She must have been the most colorful and interesting of all of Grandpa's children, so the following are some of the happenings concerning her.

Annie said that Grandma would laugh when she told of some of Fannie's antics. When she was young she decided to run away from home, and Grandma told her to go ahead. She came back to say that her bag wouldn't hold all of her clothes and was told to go across the road and borrow one from Annie's mother. Fanny decided not to go after all. She was very stylish and prissy but could be irritating and arrogant. She had a way of calling Annie and Lillian names, but it was in a code which only the closest members of her family understood and knew what she was saying.

Joe Harvey began coming to Grandpa's house and Fanny thought he was coming to see her, but he was coming to see Cornelia, her younger sister. Fanny always sent

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Crone to the kitchen to help their mother when Joe came to see Crone. Fanny got very angry, in fact, she went to a room upstairs and wouldn't come down for about two weeks. She didn't speak to Crone for years. Crone and Joe were married.

Agnes Bates said that she went to school with Irma, Fanny's daughter, and Fanny took two popular magazines and ordered patterns and made Irma new dresses for school. She could sew beautifully and the girls at school could not wait for Irma to get to school to see the pretty new dresses she wore. Fanny must have been an avid reader, as she had a large collection of books, apparently from a book club, over one hundred books in all, and Annie bought them for \$10.00 after Fanny died. She told Elaine and Elise that they would be theirs when she died and Pauline (Annie's daughter) gave the books to them. In the backs of these books are places to order patterns and she probably got some from there.

All of George's family came to visit to celebrate his birthday which was on Jan. 1. Also other members had birthdays in January. He didn't like for a fuss to be made, but he probably enjoyed it.

Estelle, his youngest daughter, married Ben Butler and lived in Franklin County but was not happy to raise her children in the environment of the area. She thought the people were crude and rough. She insisted on moving back to Liberty so the children could be raised in the schools here. Ben was a very good carpenter. Estelle was smart and wanted good educations for her children. They worked hard and accomplished that.

Jake, George's brother, married Ella Williams, and decided to build another kitchen for her on to George's house. John lost a shoe. After much searching, someone asked if he had found it and she said he found it by the pulpit. Seems that Henry, the youngest brother and Robert wanted to be a preacher and used an old tree stump in the back yard to climb upon it and preach, so it was called the "pulpit".

Josephine, George's wife, had a sister named Lucretia, who married a brown. They decided to go to Texas on horseback. They got as far as Chicot, Louisiana and she died, leaving her husband with a two year old girl. The husband left the child with a Dr. Hawkins and the father never returned. The doctor raised her and she was Donna Durio and lived to be 103 years old. Her son was the sheriff of Oakdale, Louisiana.

George A McGehee had two boys who were ministers in the Presbyterian Church, Robert McGehee and Henry McGehee [Episcopal].

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On October 26th, 1879, George united with the liberty Presbyterian Church and was made a Deacon in 1883, and an Elder in 1893, in which capacity he served until his death. In 1895 he was made trustee of the church property. He served as Sunday School Superintendent for approximately ten years, and taught a Sunday School Class for twenty years, and was an elder for over thirty years and an officer for over forty. The men's Bible Class in this church is named for him today.

Mrs. Josephine A. McGehee died at the home in liberty, April 5th, 1920, and was buried in the Liberty Cemetery. For over fifty-five years she had been faithful and devoted wife and greatly did he miss her and often expressed the desire to pass on and be with her.

Just after having his will witnessed he walked about a mile on the way to his daughter's, Mrs. B. F. (Estelle) Butler's house (the house where Estelle and Tate McGehee live today). At the creek near her home evidently his heart gave way and he died at the creek, Jan. 4, 1924. His body was found several hours later.

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Program Planned For February Meeting

Mrs. Frances Phares has arranged for a program to be presented at the February meeting. She reports:

"At the next meeting of the AH&GS meeting on February 13, 2016, Patricia McGehee Sargent, of Columbia, South Carolina, a great-grand daughter of George A. McGehee and Josephine Cotton, will present a program on the lives and work of her great-grandparents. She will be reflecting on a recording of a conversation between Cousin Annie McGehee Simpson and her Uncle Robert G. McGehee."

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