



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

April 2016

Vol. 12, No. 4

Without a past, there is no future

Next meeting:

The next meeting will be a regular business meeting on April 9, 2016 at 10:00 am in the conference room of the Liberty library. A program genealogical research will follow. (see notice on page 2).

Future Meeting Schedule

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.

December 3, 2016 — Annual Open House, details TBA.

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

AMITE COUNTY HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Draft

President Dawn Taylor called the meeting to order at 10:02 am in the meeting room of the Liberty library. There were 19 members attending. Bert Blalock gave the invocation at Pres. Taylor's request.

The draft minutes of the February 13, 2016, meeting were taken up. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Allen Terrell and seconded by Gay Blalock. The motion carried.

President Report:

Heritage Day plans are set for May 7th. Genealogy help and sharing of research and resources will take place in the library meeting room from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm. Eva Frances Dixon Phares is spearheading the organization of the tables. Signup sheets for volunteers to man the tables will be available at the April meeting. There are currently no plans to have tours of the Little Red School House at this time but that is subject to change.

We no longer have a chair of the Nominating Committee after the resignation of Linda Lea. It was decided in the Executive Board meeting to not replace that position at this time. Nominations for the Executive Board positions will be taken from the floor at the April meeting as well.

Vice President Report: VP Greg Barron was not present.

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Secretary Report: Sect. Wayne Anderson was not present.

Treasurer Report: Treasurer Gay Blalock gave the Treasurer's report. The current account balance for the society is \$11,269.97. Nelson Dawson made motion to accept the Treasurer's report; Ann Brumfield seconded. The motion carried.

COMMITTEES: Treasurer Gay Blalock gave the LRSB Committee report: In the last month, she hosted one visitor, member Rob Young from Hattiesburg.

Old Business: None

New Business: Gay Blalock shared that her sister, Sue Severson, is coming in April to work on the family Bible pages collection she has been working on. She will attend the April meeting and present a program on the genealogical research she and her husband are involved in and on the available research resources.

Other Business: None

Announcements: President Taylor reminded everyone that the next Rodney Clean-up Day is scheduled for April 2, 2016.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 am. The floor was turned over to Mrs. Eva Frances Phares. She had arranged for Kenneth Gordon and Hattie Nunnery to present an original map of Liberty and their memories of how things once were in Liberty. Ms. Frances' book was the basis of the program. Everyone who participated in the meeting received a copy of the book. The book's title is: Amite County Mississippi Historical & Genealogical Connections, Vol. VI. The book includes the descendants of Franklin Eugene Butler, MD, Thomas McDowell, Russell Davis Moore, Sr., James Robinson, Robert Edward Stewart, and Moses Whittington.

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April Meeting : Program on Genealogical Research and Available Resources

Sue Severson, charter member of the ACHGS and sister of Treasurer Gay Blalock, will be visiting from California for the April meeting. Following the business meeting, Ms. Severson will give a program on the genealogical research she and her husband have been doing and will talk about the available resources for information. Her current projects involves researching genealogical information found in old family Bible records.

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.

BITS AND PIECES OF AMITE COUNTY HISTORY

Historical Events That Have Occurred in April: Their Significance in Amite County History

The month of April is notable for all the historically significant events that have taken place over the years. While there are obviously many more events than those listed below, this article confines itself to events that had impact upon Amite County (or the area that would become Amite County). Since some of the events are defined briefly and may not clearly show how Amite County was impacted, some additional explanation is given.

1513

April 2--Juan Ponce de Leon discovered Florida.

April 8--Juan Ponce de Leon claimed Florida for Spain.

The actions of De Leon are important to Amite County because they marked the beginning of the exploration of the southern areas of what is now the United States and had influence on the claims made on our area by various European powers and later the newly formed United States.

1775

April 19--The American Revolutionary War began with the battles of Lexington & Concord.

The American Revolution was important because it set in motion the events that allowed the establishment of a form of government never before attempted and it rejected the continuation of rule by a monarchy totally removed from North America.

1783

April 11--Congress proclaimed the end of the Revolutionary War.

Once the war was officially ended, the volunteer soldiers who had made up much of the Continental Army ranks could return home and begin to build a productive life facilitated by a government which provided more individual freedom and self-determination. This new personal freedom allowed the eventual spread of settlers into areas to the west of the original colonies, a process that increased in popularity as the US obtained those territories.

1803

April 30--The United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France.

1861

April 12--The bombardment of Fort Sumter (Charleston, South Carolina) began, starting the Civil War.

April 13--Fort Sumter informally surrendered in order to stop the bombardment.

April 14--The Union Army forces formally surrendered to the Confederate Army.

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April 15—US President Lincoln mobilized a volunteer Union army of 75,000 men.

Unfortunately, these four events, while stating what occurred, are devoid of context, either with regard to how circumstances led to them or what impact they would have.

While the term "Civil War" is usually used to describe the conflict of 1861-1865, this war was not a true civil war by definition. A civil war is an armed conflict between two factions within a country/state/nation trying to seize, or retain, control of that country. At the time of the Fort Sumter bombardment, the Confederate States of America, a separate country from the United States, had been formed by willing association of individual states that had previously seceded from the United States. Therefore, the CSA was not a faction within the US but was a separate, albeit new, country. A more appropriate name for this conflict was "the War Between the States" which the US Congress actually adopted at one point in the early 20th century to be the official name of the conflict; however, since the resolution had no "teeth" to prevent using the term "Civil War" in such things as textbooks, it had little impact on what title was usually applied to the war.

Secondly, the fact that the Confederacy fired on the US forces in Ft. Sumter is usually interpreted to mean that "the South started the war." This was true only to the extent that the Confederacy was forced to take a strong action because the US was resisting leaving property to which it had no right. When Lincoln refused to allow the forces in Ft. Sumter to surrender the fort and sent ships to resupply and reinforce the fort's contingent, the Confederacy was faced with either taking the fort before the US ships arrived or trying to stop the ships before they could enter the Charleston harbor area. Since the better choice was to take the fort, that's what was chosen. Interestingly, the Confederacy's bombardment of the fort caused no casualties among the US forces; however, the fort's men caused an accidental explosion while leaving the fort after its surrender which did result in casualties.

Thirdly, Lincoln used the firing on Ft. Sumter to overcome the sentiment of a large number of Northerners who simply wanted to let the South go its own way and to justify the military build-up in US forces both in activation of the army mentioned above as well as adding new recruits, first by volunteer enlistment and then by conscription when voluntary enlistment dried up. Of course he failed to admit publicly that the Confederacy had been tendering offers of negotiating a peaceful settlement of conflict between US and CS, offers which they continued to tender even after Ft. Sumter. Lincoln and his advisors (who some said were really his political bosses who were calling the shots) either ignored or refused such offers of peaceful settlement of differences.

Of course the impact of these 1861 events on Amite County and the entire South were soon felt as the Confederacy began in earnest to build an army to counter what was obviously going to be war to stop the aggression of the US against the Confederacy.

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1862

April 6--Battle of Shiloh, Tennessee.

This battle had a significant impact on Amite Countians who had joined the Confederate Army in 1861. The specific units which were made up of almost all Amite County volunteers were Company C (the Amite Rifles) of the 7th Mississippi Infantry Regiment and Company E (the Liberty Guards) of the 22nd Infantry Regiment.

1865

April 9--Robert E. Lee surrendered the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House, Virginia.

April 14—US President Abraham Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth, at Ford's Theatre, Washington, D.C., while watching a performance of *Our American Cousin*.

April 15--Lincoln died at 7:22 a.m., in Washington, D.C.

April 26--The Confederate Army of Tennessee was surrendered by Gen. Joseph E. Johnston to US General William T. Sherman in North Carolina.

All of the units comprised primarily of Amite Countians were attached to the Confederate Army of Tennessee so their surrender came on April 26. At that time, though, a large number of still living Amite Countians were prisoners of war in various US prison camps in the north. Most of these men were not released for another two to three months after the end of the war.

1917

April 2—President Woodrow Wilson requested Congress declare war on Germany so that the US could enter the war in Europe.

April 4—Congress acted to approve a declaration of war.

While World War I had far less impact on Amite Countians than World War II, a significant number of men were called up for service when a draft to build up the armed forces was instituted. The draft actually began before the US entered the war, obviously in anticipation that entry at some point was inevitable.

1935

April 7--Tornados struck the Town of Gloster and the Gillsburg community causing significant damage and loss of life.

Article contributed by Wayne Anderson, Newsletter Editor

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