



# Rankin County Historical Society

Post Office Box 841  
Brandon, Mississippi 39043  
www.rankinhistory.com

## NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2011

# Officers elected for 2011-2013

At the meeting held February 10, Anne Vanderleest was elected to serve as president of Rankin County Historical Society for the two year term of March 2011 through February 2013.



Paul Davis was selected to serve another term as vice president while Joan Singleary was named again to the office of secretary. Mary Lou Ayers will fill the position of member-at-large, post I.

Nathan Bradshaw, who was elected in June 2010 to fill the vacancy in the member-at-

large, post II, will continue to serve on the executive board along with our retiring president, Mel Corley.

The office of treasurer remains open. If you know of someone who is willing to accept this responsibility, please

let one of your officers know. The job is not hard, and Anne will be doing on-the-job training. Computer skills are not required; the job may be done with an old-fashioned pencil.

See the list of your new officers on page 4.

## Explore the Gold Coast in March

Davie Lindsey and Larry Rhodes, members of the Gold Coast Historical Society will present a program at the March RCHS meeting.

The meeting to be held at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, March

10, in the Brandon Library conference room, will be the first meeting of our new year and refreshments will be served.



The Gold Coast society is a newly formed group that has set as their mission the preservation of the remaining buildings in this famous, or infamous, section of Rankin County.

Join us for an interesting and fun-filled evening.

See picture on page 3.

## A letter from our President

We missed you!

At the February meeting I was elected president of the Rankin County Historical Society, an honor I hope I can live up to. Unfortunately, only half the officers and three other brave souls were able to attend; my acceptance speech was “preached to the choir.

*(Continued on page 2)*

# Museum Open House set for April

Make plans now to celebrate the month of April as Open House month at Rankin County Historical Society Museum. There are five weekends this April to open our doors to visitors and showcase our collection of memorabilia; “old-time” tools, household items, furniture, as well as general store items. What better time than Spring to offer a large dose of Mississippi hospitality.

Attendance at last October’s Open House was one of the largest turnouts we have had in some time. Many visitors declared themselves as first timers and then returned another weekend with friends and family to show what they had found — objects like grandma had in her home. Children and young people seem especially fascinated by the collection and are always full of questions. One of their favorite items seems to be the old-fashioned computer, better known as an Underwood typewriter.

Museum Open House is scheduled each Saturday and Sunday afternoon from 2:00 until 4:00 P.M. throughout the month of April.

When you are asked to serve as host, please say yes; it will be a fun experience.

## President’s Letter ...

*(Continued from page 1)*

I have great hopes for the Rankin County Historical Society having spent over five years attending meetings, participating in spring and fall cleanup, hosting open houses, planning teas, antique appraisements, picking up mail, balancing the checkbook and watching our buildings and attendance decline. It can be disheartening.

On the other hand, I have taken personal pride in creating a place for researchers to share their family histories, purchase our books and build a great environment for study and research, something our enthusiastic charter members dreamed about and began 30 years ago.

We cannot change the economy, Katrina, or our age; but we can make a difference in our community. Just like in our own homes we have to pay the bills, clean house, keep the lawn cut and occasionally paint and repair. Well, the society has four buildings that need cleaning, paying bills, and unfortunately it is now time to assess the cost of the needed repairs. One person cannot do it alone. It is going to take our whole village.

I hope you will be a part of our community of volunteers (the villagers) who take pride in where we live and what we pass down to our children. Let’s put our heads, hearts and hands together at our next meeting on Thursday, March 10, at 7:00 P.M.

We can make it happen!

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## Company’s coming! Time to spruce up our buildings

In order to welcome our guests who will be visiting us during the April weekends it is time to clean house. Cleaning Day for the Museum is tentatively set for Friday, March 18, from 10:00 A.M. until 12:00 noon.

Many hands make short work out of all jobs so please come help the society get spic-and-span so we will be putting

our best foot forward during the April Open House. If you will be helping us with our spring cleanup, leave your name with Anne at the library or call Joan at 601-825-6490; if we have to change the schedule you will be notified.

## Thank you

A big thank you goes out to all our membership who returned their proxy votes. Our receiving them assured a quorum that enabled us to have the election as scheduled.

## New resources added to history/genealogy files

Several new resource items have been added to the shelves at the Brandon Library Genealogy Room. These books, maps and microfilm are added through the generosity of Friends of the Library as well as patrons who visit the library for family research. Recent additions are:

*Mississippi Cemetery and Bible Records*, Vols 1, 2, 10, 19, 20, 22; *Family Maps of Simpson County*, donated by Rick Myers; *Pelahatchie Quadragle Map 1924*, donated by Don Barrow; microfilm recently added includes: *Mississippi Death Certificates Index A-Z, 1912-1914*; *Brandon Republican*, mid to late 1800's, select issues; *Pelahatchie News*, March 23, 1893; *Brandon Democrat*, March 5, 1885; Rankin County Personal and Land Taxes, 1870-1905.

The collection available for historical and genealogical research continues to grow as does the reputation of the Brandon Library being the "come to" place for information. Queries have been received and answered recently from California and Texas; with visitors from Kansas and Colorado.

Our thanks go to those who continue to patronize and support our library.



### By-gone days on the Gold Coast

Standing high on top of boxes of liquor is Deputy Sheriff Billy Holyfield.

*From the Holyfield collection held by Rankin County Historical Society*

### Plans for the future

When we asked Mel Corley, our retiring president, about his future plans, this was his reply. Mel also recently retired from the Air National Guard.

My plan for the future is to study the past. I know there is no future in history but I enjoy looking back at the things Mississippi and our country have done.

Now, to stay busy, I'll be making more field trips to discover

forgotten places and repair some of those old, worn master pieces of mechanical engineering such as cars and clocks, things that we all take for granted in our every day lives. Of course a few older buildings will need some attention from time to time. For now I'm really into my family genealogy.

Okay, Mel, we'll be looking for you in the Genealogy Room and looking forward to stories of all those brick walls you scale.

### Paid memberships for 2011

Bryan, Shannon, Alexis, Cody Bailey  
Mark C., Lady and Chase Baker  
John and Barbara Collier  
Mel Corley  
Paul and Carla Davis  
Doris Gibson  
Valerie B. Johnson, St. George, UT  
Nina Jones  
Carlo and Debbie Martella  
Martha and Gilbert McCown  
John N. and Inez Munn

Lloydine Outten, Los Angeles, CA  
Joan Singletary  
Dirk and Anne Vanderleest  
Linda Wolfe  
Henry A. and Nelda Ann Wood

Salt was so scarce during the Civil War that it was salvaged from the floors of smokehouses. One Rankin Countian drove a pair of mules to New Iberia, LA, to obtain salt; it took him 4 weeks.

# The future of our past — show you care

In your research have you found photos or letters, and legal documents with ink so faded that the record could not be read? To help conserve items that trace the history of our Rankin County ancestors, a Volunteer Day is being set up. No experience is necessary.

One day a month will be set aside for us to help conserve records for future generations. We will scan ledgers, photos,

## Field Trip

Members of the Genealogy Club are planning to visit the Mississippi Library Commission on Thursday, March 3, at 10:30 A.M. to tour their library and genealogy collection. If you would like to join this tour and “Dutch treat” lunch afterward, let Anne know by e-mail. Bring your library card. If you do not have a current card, please get one at the Brandon Library before Thursday. Meet at 10:00 A.M. at the library to caravan.

## RGHS Website

We are still working on our new website; the home page is up and we think it is one of the most attractive pages in cyber land. Stay with us as we add to the site. If you take a look, please let us know what you think of the design.  
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scrapbooks and other material that has been entrusted to us for safe keeping. If a computer scares you, there are many other jobs to be done: cutting obituaries from newspapers, checking indexed items, or transcribing materials. The only



There are several positions open in our organization that need to be filled if we are to continue to function and fulfill our mission as a society.

The position of **Treasurer** is open and needs to be filled. Duties of the treasurer include: balance monthly bank statement; make bank deposits once or twice a month; write checks for bills due (last year sixteen checks were written); prepare monthly reports for RGHS meetings; track sales; pick up mail from the Brandon Post Office or Library. A knowledge of QUICKEN is helpful but not necessary. Time spent on the job averages about one hour a month.

A **Meeting Coordinator** will help set up the meeting

skill you need is a desire and a willingness to help and the only equipment you need to bring is yourself. For more information contact Anne Vanderleest at the Brandon Library.

The future is coming and we are the caretakers.

## Positions available

room and call for help when it is needed; be sure the sign is set out to direct members to the proper room and that “goodies” are available for any special meetings.

**Open House Coordinator** will make phone calls to members to schedule hosts for our April and October Open House weekends at the Museum.

A **Membership Coordinator** to assist with the mail-out of our Newsletters. This will require an hour or two on a quarterly basis to help fold, stuff, seal, stamp, and apply address labels to envelopes. Also, there are times when help is needed in mailing monthly meeting notices to members requiring US postal service mail delivery.

### Officers of Rankin County Historical Society

Anne Vanderleest, President, [jetplex@bellsouth.net](mailto:jetplex@bellsouth.net)

Paul Davis, Vice President, [polywog1@comcast.net](mailto:polywog1@comcast.net)

Joan Singletary, Secretary and Editor of Newsletter, [josing@bellsouth.net](mailto:josing@bellsouth.net)

Nathan Bradshaw, Member at Large, Post I, [jnbradshaw33@bellsouth.net](mailto:jnbradshaw33@bellsouth.net)

Mary Lou Ayers, Member at Large, Post II, [maryscemeteries@bellsouth.net](mailto:maryscemeteries@bellsouth.net)

Mel Corley, Past President, [corley650@aol.com](mailto:corley650@aol.com)

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