



Rankin County Historical Society

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NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2012



Your Calendar

November 19, 2012: Deadline for nominations of 2013-2014 RCHS officers to be returned to nominating committee.

November 27: 7:00 P.M., Library, Shared Meeting with Brandon Genealogical & Historical Society.

Short business meeting and election of officers by Rankin County Historical Society.

Grady Howell, guest speaker, "Thanksgiving Day in Mississippi".

December: Meeting of Board of Directors of Rankin County Historical Society.

January 22, 2013: 7:00 P.M. Shared Meeting with Brandon Genealogical and Historical Society, Board of Supervisors Room, Courthouse Annex.

January 29: 12:00 Noon, Brandon Library, *Munch on History*, "Finding Hooch and Homicide on the Gold Coast" with speaker Tom Henderson.

February: Meeting of Board of Directors of Rankin County Historical Society.

March 26: 7:00 P.M. Library Shared Meeting with Brandon Genealogical & Historical Society.

March 31: Easter Sunday.

April 20: Heritage Day.

Election time again!

It is election time again for the Rankin County Historical Society.

According to our By-laws, officers serve a two-year term beginning with the calendar year. All offices, with the exception of the Member-at-large, Post I position currently held by Mary Lou Ayers, are open for nominations; the offices to be filled are: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Member-at-large.

The nominating committee will be accepting names for the open positions.

There was no October meeting, as stated in the by-laws; therefore the committee will need your nominations for these offices no later than Monday, November 19 to prepare the slate for the general meeting on November 27. Serving on this committee are Anne Vanderleest, Paul Davis and Joan Singletary.

You may use the enclosed form for nominations; the form can be returned by bringing it to the Brandon library, or by mail to the society at Post Office Box 841, Brandon, MS 39043. You may also make nominations by e-mail to rchsinc@aol.com, a form is not necessary, just be

sure to designate the position beside each name you are placing in nomination. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the meeting.

Please remember that a quorum must be present in order to conduct business. This will be a short meeting so we can enjoy Grady Howell's program.



Grady Howell to speak

Grady Howell will be guest speaker at the joint meeting of the Rankin County Historical Society and the Brandon Genealogical and Historical Society scheduled for Tuesday, November 27, at 7:00 P.M. at the Brandon Library. He will share his history of the Thanksgiving Day holiday in Mississippi from the first proclamation issued by Governor Albert Gallatin Brown in 1847. The presentation traces how the history of the holiday reflects the issues, interests, and culture of the time and place in which it is celebrated.

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Mr. Howell works for the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and has written extensively about the Civil War in Mississippi. Among his well-known publications are: *For Dixie Land, I'll Take My Stand: A Muster Listing of All Known Mississippi Confederate Soldiers, Sailors and Marines*; *Going to Meet the Yankees: A History of the Bloody Sixth Mississippi Infantry, C.S.A.*; *Hill of Death: The Battle of Champion Hill*; and *To Live and Die in Dixie*.

Invite your friends to join us for this special celebration; it promises to be an informative and entertaining evening.

Light refreshments will be served.

Thank you, Amy and Harry

Special thank yous go to Amy Clark and Harry Black for completing two long needed projects.

Amy prepared an index for the cemeteries of Mississippi by county name. Working from the CD prepared by Pat Wellington several years ago, Ms. Clark indexed some 3,000 Mississippi cemeteries according to the county where each is located. Though not all counties have inventoried their cemeteries, this index will be a great help to researchers looking for burials.

Another big round of applause goes to Harry Black who figured out how to mount our camera and digitize an 1860's Rankin County store ledger. Engineers are always handy to have around.

Now, who would like to prepare this index? Thank you, Amy and Harry, you are both great!



Recent visitors to the Historical Society Museum were Den Leader John Switzer and Pack 329 members. Left to right are Zane Smith, Brayden Greene, Luke Switzer, Gage Edwards, Wyatt Miles, Weston Pigott, and Ryan Beard.

Cub Scouts visit RCHS museum

Cub Scout Pack 329, Den 4, of the Tiger Cubs of Brandon visited the Rankin County Historical Society Museum on October 13. John Switzer is the Den Leader of this Pack which is chartered by Crossgates United Methodist Church.

Den members are working to

receive the Tiger Cub badge.

Badge requirements asks them to discover how family life was the same and how it was different many years ago by visiting either a library, a historical society or museum, an old farm, a historical building, or an older person in the community.



Positions available

Coordinator Needed: Will you serve as coordinator for the joint meetings we are enjoying with the Brandon Genealogical and Historical Society. Once every four months the RCHS hosts the meeting (that's only three times a year), and we need help in making phone calls to ask someone to furnish light refreshments as well as to see that chairs and the refreshment table are set up for our visitors and membership.

Mail Assistant Needed: Help

with getting out our Newsletters and other special mailings is needed. This involves folding, stuffing, labeling and stamping envelopes.

Transcriber Needed: We need help transcribing or indexing records to be used by researchers through the historical society or the library. Short-term or long-term – whatever you have the time to do.

For any of these positions Call Anne Vanderleest, 601-594-9013.

Antiques Showcase a big success

Anne Stratton once again entertained and charmed over 100 patrons during her presentation of "Antiques Showcase". Items brought for appraisal ran the gamut from whimsical to sublime; grandmother's treasures to pieces picked up at the thrift store.

The knowledge that Ms. Stratton generously shares with her audience is priceless – you always leave knowing so much more than when you arrived.



A question is fielded by Anne Stratton as she holds a prized ball glove.

Heritage Day set for April 20, 2013

Mark your calendar now for Saturday, April 20: Heritage Day 2013. Plans are already underway for next year's Heritage Day following our successful start this year. Craftsmen who tirelessly demonstrated their skills throughout the day are planning to return and the very popular wagon rides will be offered again.

We want to thank Martha McCown for coordinating the refreshments as well as all the members who prepared snacks, furnished drinks, and kept the table filled throughout the day.

Many thanks also go to all of you who attended and shared your treasures with us. You made our day.

And oh yes, Anne does plan to return in the Spring.

New maps resource

A free, Historic Maps of Mississippi site is now available to researchers at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History web site: http://mdah.state.ms.us/arrec/digital_archives/mapindex/. Developed by Paul Davis in concert with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, the site references over 1,000 maps, 75% of which contain a high resolution image. Each map reference contains up to fourteen categories of information. They are: title, author, scale, situation date, publication date, type of map, features, comments, geographic coverage, repository, language, publisher, size, links to scanned images and color status.

The data set is unique in that all natural and cultural features on a map are listed, along with the geographic area covered by the map.



Anne Stratton tells the story of this treasured vase.

These and other data categories can be searched in combination. For instance, maps that contain the names of local land owners or residents can be searched by a given county or city/town. Translations for foreign titles and other information are provided. It is suggested that the "Search Hints" be read before using the site.

"Paul Davis's generosity has made it much simpler for people to work with maps online," said MDAH Electronic Archives section head David Pilcher. "Some donors give things like photographs or family papers, but Mr. Davis donated thirty years of his research about Mississippi maps."

Comments can be sent to polywog1@comcast.net using "Map Site" as the subject.

Officers of Rankin County Historical Society

Anne Vanderleest, President, jetplex@bellsouth.net

Paul Davis, Vice President, polywog1@comcast.net

Joan Singletary, Secretary and Editor of Newsletter, news@rankinhistory.org

Nathan Bradshaw, Member at Large, Post I

Mary Lou Ayers, Member at Large, Post II

Mel Corley, Past President, corley650@aol.com

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Wilson-Neely House to get new roof

The Rankin County Board of Supervisors has approved a work order for a new roof on the Wilson-Neely House. Estimated start of construction is November 15.

Mr. Reiford Castens of Metal Builders Supply Company who donated the metal roofing for the Atkins-McRae store is again donating the roofing for this project.

Prep work will be done by Johnny Jones, maintenance direc-

tor for the county, and his crew. They also plan to scrape the front columns and replace the fascia boards. The front gable on the store will get a face lift when they add batten to the existing boards.

Much work remains to be done on the house, especially in the back, but first and foremost the roof needs to be replaced as it has been leaking for years.

Many thanks are due to Brandon Mayor Tim Coulter who stepped up to the plate on behalf of the City of Brandon to make the funds available to pay for the installation of the roof.

Raymond Dean who installed the store roofing will also top off the house. RCHS will be responsible for other necessary materials.

Yes, it takes a village.

Hooch and homicide at *Munch on History*

Tom Henderson, library director of Millsaps College, will join us on Tuesday, January 29, for another session of *Munch on History* in the large meeting room of the Brandon library from 12 Noon until 1:00 P.M.

Subject of the program will be "Finding Hooch and Homicide on the Gold Coast".

Mr. Henderson attended high school in Pearl then went to college at the University of Southern Mississippi and Florida State. Before joining the Millsaps faculty he worked at the Mississippi Library Commission and the Mississippi State University library.

Mr. Henderson has collected pictures and maps of the Gold Coast area and presents a most entertaining and educational program.

Bring your brown bag

(containing lunch only, please). Drinks and a dessert will be furnished by your hosts, the Rankin County Historical

Society and the Brandon Library.



In my opinion, it is time

Do you ever feel left out? Would you like to be able to help with a project but you haven't been asked? Now is the time to step up and say "I will help"!

If you have a talent that you have kept hidden, now is the time for you to stand up and confess to a passion you enjoy. Are you good with figures? Do you enjoy talking to people? Can you attend meetings of the Supervisors or City Council? Do you like to cook? Can you enter information into a computer? Do you have ideas for preserving our heritage?

The Rankin County Historical Society has made great strides this past year under the leadership of our president, Anne Vanderleest. She worked to obtain the material, labor, and funding to get a new roof placed on the Atkins-McRae Store plus making some very necessary repairs to the building.

At this time we have received word that a new metal roof will be put on the Wilson-Neely House with work beginning in a few weeks. Mr. Reiford Castens of Metal Building Supply Company donated the metal roofing for the Atkins-McRae Store and is also donating the roofing material for this second project. Thanks do not begin to cover our gratitude to Mr. Castens.

Last March many groups interested in preserving Rankin County History were brought together for the first time by Ms. Vanderleest in a symposium where all could share their interests and concerns.

Heritage Day in April highlighted the rich traditions we share as Rankin Countians. People from all corners of the county shared their knowledge and skills while offering a glimpse into the past; into the lives of our ancestors. And we heard from all – let's do it again!

There is still a lot to be done as a society; the exhibits in our museum buildings need work in order to present them to the public as they should be seen and enjoyed, especially by the young people who visit.

How many people does it take to make a historical society? We all bring something different to the table and it takes each and every one of us with our different interests and talents. So don't be left out again. Step up and say I will help!

—Joan Singletary, Secretary