

Port Aransas Preservation and Historical Association

Volume 1, Issue 3

PAPHA Newsletter

December, 2007

Planning for tax deduction; think of PAPHA

As you begin to think of filing your taxes, please keep PAPHA in mind. As a 501(c)(3), all donations are tax deductible.

At the risk of sounding like a capitalistic dog, PAPHA is working to preserve the heart and soul of the sleepy fishing village we all love so much and that still exists under all the new development. Our goals include providing a historic museum for the town and having reminders of the past for future generations.

Please consider making members of your family and businesses, as along with the money benefit, numbers help enormously when submitting grants. The organization is constantly submitting grants and the better the numbers, the better our chances are to receive money.

Jetty newspaper, Family Center IGA, Gratitude, Port Aransas Business Center and the Art Center for the Islands.

(See Page 3 for information on the brick pavers PAPHA has for sale.)

PAPHA totes cost \$12 and can be ordered with a form from the PAPHA website, www.portausa.com or by calling 361-749-3800.

Photos are available in all sizes as well as on mugs, mouse pads, key chains,

t-shirts and more by clicking on the **Big Blue Button**.

Also on the website are order forms for membership applications, fund donations, 2005 Storytelling CDs, t-shirts and more.

Buying merchandise will help Port A get closer to its historical museum.



PAPHA Financials

As of Nov. 30:

\$756.40 in operating account

\$50,574.59 in Building account

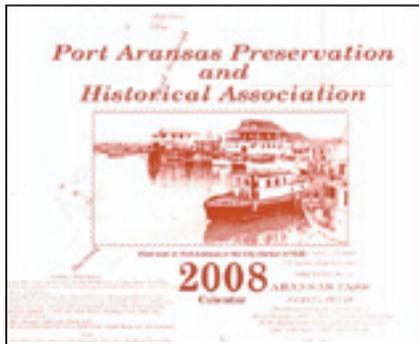
Membership dues are valid Jan. - Dec.

www.portausa.com

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Send Letters To The Editor
to rattraxx@centurytel.net



PAPHA has several items for sale, the most time sensitive being the 2008 calendars. They are selling for \$15 and may be purchased at the *South*

Calender of Events

Jan. 24-26.....Digology

Feb. 16.....Photo Race

Feb. 25.....Chocolate Caching

PORT ARANSAS PRESERVATION & HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

www.portausa.com

Fund Drive Contribution Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Amount donated _____

[] Please send a charitable contribution receipt.

Send to: PAPHA
PO Box 677, Port Aransas, TX 78373

Tarpon Club once touted as a mecca on St. Jo Island

By Leslie Willey Jr.

In the year 1899, Port Aransas, known as Tarpon then, was getting its newest establishment. It wasn't on Mustang island, but across the channel on St. Joseph's Island. It was called the Tarpon Club, and was the creation of Eddie Green, 29 year-old-son of wealthy New York financier, Harriet 'Hettie' Green.

The club was built over a two year period and opened at the beginning of 1902.

They called it Sport, Texas, and the majority of its 300 members were wealthy men from New York, Colorado and Texas. It was exclusive to the point that the members had bought up all the land in the surrounding area of the island and prohibited landing by any one other than members.

When a boatman was required for fishing or hunting, they would run up a flag for that particular boatman on a flag pole mounted on the buildings lookout dome. Upon spotting the signal, the local life saving station, located at the west corner of Tarrant and Station street would send a message to that person.

The club was a town unto itself, being mostly self contained, even to the



Photo from the PAPHA archives

St. Jo club exclusive

The Tarpon Club, circa 1903, is shown in this photo taken approximately near where the Ancel Brundrett pier exists today at the end of Station Street.

land. The picture below was taken in the late 1930s, and the barrenness of the island is evident.

The power for the club was run through a cable stretching from Tarpon, under the channel to St. Joseph's Island. The description given was that when the club was lit at night, no lighthouse was needed as it was such a spectacular sight. To get here was also an arduous journey. You could go by rail to San Antonio, then catch the Aransas Pass railroad to Rockport. There they would ride the 7 miles across the bay to Sport. If you preferred the water route, you took the steamer to Galveston and from there caught the little schooners that plied the Gulf of Mexico about every two or three weeks to the Aransas Pass.

One of the club's rules was that no business could be transacted, other than guide service and sport related items. All outside business stayed at the dock back in Rockport. When the members came to Sport, it was for sport. Whether fishing for tarpon or other species, duck hunting or just shooting the large sand crabs with a 22 caliber rifle from the observation decks, the idea was sport and recreation.

Commodore Green's flagship yacht was the 'Maria'. It had a ten horsepower Globe engine and was tended by Ed Cotter of Tarpon. He later bought a launch named the 'Mabel' that had a 15 horsepower engine.

He had many boats in his career, as boat racing was one of his passions. His boats won several prestigious awards in both national and international competition.

When at the Tarpon Club, Eddie

Green was referred to as Commodore Green. He was big news in the Corpus Christi Caller in those days and even his expected arrival made the news.

He was also a charitable man, buying the pews for the newly completed Catholic church here in Tarpon in December of 1901. His club was also most likely a boon to the island economy during the various hunting and fishing seasons. The influx of sportsmen would have kept the local guides quite busy with all the hunting and fishing, not to mention the building of the club itself.

Commodore Green liked to spend his winters in Texas and Florida. He also owned a railroad and insurance company in Texas and was very prominent in Texas politics.

Green gave huge amounts of money to Republican politics until he had a falling out with them, wherein he bolted to the democratic party supporting FDR in his presidential campaign.

Green died in June 1936 in Terril, Texas. He was survived by his wife, Mabel, whom he married in 1917. He had left Texas for a while in about 1910 to attend to his mother's affairs prior to her death in 1916.

Four states including Texas, fought over his place of residence after he died leaving an estate of more than \$100,000,000 and no will. His sister also fought his wife over the inheritance, as a lot of his money had come from his mother and father's estates, with the provision that the money stayed in the family. Texas lost and the women fought to somewhat of a draw.

Barney Farley III and Ned Teller contributed research for this article.



point of having its own postmaster. Between March of 1899 and December of 1904, there were two postmasters, Carl R. Evans and Austin R. A. Brice. It was discontinued in January 1905, and the mail was sent to Tarpon.

St. Joseph's Island was very flat and barren back in those days. It was so close to complete sea level that you could see the waves breaking on the beach from the Lydia Ann Channel side of the is-

Nancy's Notes

--a message from the
museum interim director
Nancy Phillips

Several suggestions have been submitted for naming the museum to be created from the Mercer House. The favorite so far is Village Museum.

Now PAPHA would like to have your reaction to this possibility. Does it convey the feeling you'd like for the museum to hold? Does it sound good to you? Let us know by phone or e-mail, 749-0321, or nancy@seminoleoklahoma.com.

Excitement is building as we get closer to "moving day" for our museum building. The house is preparing for its new life as home to a history museum for Port Aransas.

Some hearty folks hacked down the shrubs surrounding the house that would be in the way of the mover, Mr. Lara. They carted it away, so the coast is clear there.

There will be problems to be worked out as the building is reassembled and the interior rearranged to become a workable museum layout.

David Murrah of Southwest Museum Services, with whom PAPHA has contracted to help with the museum set up, has designed the most intriguing story line and layout. Now we need to start planning that work. Volunteers help will be appreciated.

As you near the end of the year in your personal life, maybe you'd like to make a donation that you'd been planning. If you donate before the end of the year, you can take this amount as a deduction on the current year's taxes. Also, it will help to shorten the time until the dream of a museum comes true.

A paver would make a nice holiday gift for a friend. Or it would be a nice thing to memorialize a loved one at this time. All are deductible.

As you make out your Christmas cards this year, make out an extra one with a check to help preserve our town's history.

Name the museum!

**Send suggestions to PAPHA
Vice-President/Interim Museum
Director Nancy Phillips at
nancy@seminoleoklahoma.com**



In an artist's eyes

Artist Nancy Buskey painted this rendering of what the Community Center and new historical museum might resemble with the planned landscaping and walkways.

Leave a mark on Port Aransas in museum walkway brick pavers

Brick pavers that will line the path to the new historical museum soon to be in place next to the Community Center in Port Aransas are for sale for \$45.

Memorialize a loved one or recognize a business, an organization or your family in stone for posterity with a paver.

The 4-inch by 8-inch pavers include three lines of laser engraving with each line limited to 14 characters.

A membership or brick paver in their

PAPHA, Parks & Rec set projects

PAPHA has partnered with the Parks and Recreation Department on four projects in the next few months.

Digology - A staged archeological dig will be created in Charlie's Pasture. Items to be found relate to the recent past and long-ago past.

Photo Race - Close-up pictures of historical/interesting sites in Port A will be taken. Each contestant will get a flyer with the pictures and must go around and duplicate the picture.

Chocolate Caching: PAPHA will provide 50 questions and answers to match against a master list. Answer correct to win chocolate.

name would also be a way to honor those living or who have passed on.

The brick pavers may be ordered with an order form on the PAPHA website or by contacting Betty Bundy at 361-749-3406.

Pennings by Pam

As another year passes and more history made, I would like to thank all those who have helped PAPHA in 2007. The organization has made incredible strides this year.

So many people -- residents, visitors and others who love Port A -- along with businesses, organizations and property owners -- have pitched in to help.

More help will be needed as we proceed and I am confident it will come when needed most.

I invite anyone to offer whatever time and talents they possess to aid in this progress. To become the community museum PAPHA intends to open, ownership must be felt by all. The best way to help create that feeling, is by not being a bystander ... get involved!

As this newsletter goes out, work has begun on the Community Center, with pilings being replaced, and things progress.

It's time to pay your annual membership dues for 2008. Membership dues are valid Jan. - Dec.

PORT ARANSAS PRESERVATION & HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
www.portausa.com

Membership Application

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Membership Category _____

(Family membership only) - # in Family _____

(Club/Organization only) - # of members _____

(Student with class only) - # of students _____

Memberships

<u>Category</u>	<u>Contribution</u>
Individual.....	\$15 per year
Family.....	\$20 per year
Business.....	\$25 per year
Student (individual).....	\$2 per year
Student (with class or group).....	\$1 per year
Clubs/Organizations	\$1 per member a year-\$25 max.
Lifetime	\$1000

Supporting Memberships:

Decade.....	\$26 - \$50 per year
Century.....	\$51 - \$100 per year
Epoch.....	\$101 - \$500 per year
Millennium.....	\$501 - \$1000 per year

Send to: PAPHA
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