

Port Aransas Preservation and Historical Association

Volume 3, Issue 2

PAPHA Newsletter

February 2009

Bid up, auction closes Wednesday <http://portaransas.cmarket.com>

The first non-profit online auction fundraising site is open for bidding

until through Wednesday, March 4, at 10pm. If you have already visited the site, visit again. More items have been

added. Some items have had opening bid lowered. There is something for any price range, and the variety allows for every taste.

A Special Invitation

BY BETTY TURNER

PAPHA TRUSTEE CHAIRMAN

Too much and too long we have surrendered our historical heritage to the attics and garages of our citizens. But thanks to the hard work of many caring and generous people, Port Aransas finally has its own beautiful depository for the collection and display of historic photographs, documents and memorabilia called the Port Aransas Museum.

Please join us for the first annual Old Town Festival Dinner and Live Auction that benefits our new museum, Saturday, March 7, 7pm, at the Community Center. Tickets to the gourmet dinner catered by Miss K are \$50 per person. Music, candlelight, a sit down dinner and cash bar will make this a gala evening you won't want to miss. RSVP to (361) 749-3800 or mail check to PAPHA, PO Box 677, Port Aransas. Thank you.

*Visit the Port Aransas Museum
Thursday - Saturday, 1 - 5pm*

Funds will be used to hire a museum design company that will design, fabricate and install three to five permanent exhibits and for museum operations.

So be a part of raising money to bringing professional, high-tech, interactive exhibits to the Port Aransas Museum.

Come On Down...

Celebrate Port A with other island lovers on Saturday, March 7!

culminating with a fancy sit-down dinner a live auction.

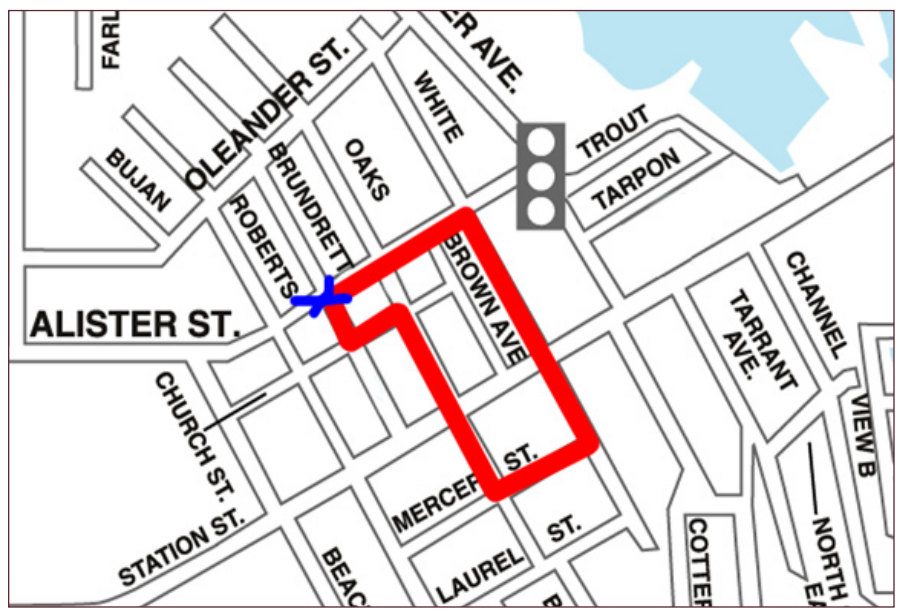
The 3rd Annual Old Town Festival will include storytelling, a silent auction, museum tours, games for kids, a parade, wine and cheese for a donation; all

Everyone is invited to participate and watch the parade which will wind around old town historical sites.

See 'Festival' on Page 3

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Nancy's Notes

--a message from the museum interim director

Your Museum took a big step this month by hiring as museum director, Rick Pratt. He is our most valuable asset at this juncture. The magnificent work of the past in programs and beginning a museum have to take a new direction as we grow. Rick is the perfect person to lead us and direct us.

This means that everyone interested in preserving history needs to do a part, large or small, to keep it growing.

There is a great, fairly large group of docents signed up and trained for the fun job. They are the usual group of Port A folks, though, and frequently take trips or have houseguests. So the need is always there for more helpers to work as docents. The jobs may involve working in the gift shop, leading tours through the museum, helping with school class trips, hosting at special events and other obligations as they occur. If you're at all interested to find out more about this, you can call me at 749-0321.

When the exhibits are under revision, as they soon will be, help is needed to prepare them and hang the framed items. Rick will be busy planning, but always needs extra hands at the installation phase.

Computer jobs are always needed. If you're capable of some computer work, printing labels, postcards, updating lists, etc., maybe you'd like to work in that area.

Whatever your talents, we will find a need for them. Please share with our new museum and we'll all be a part of the new growth.

TREAT YOURSELF OR A FRIEND WITH ANY OF THE TERRIFIC ITEMS IN OUR GIFT SHOP INSIDE THE MUSEUM - JEWELRY, CALENDARS, CANDLES, SOAPS, POTTERY, POSTCARDS, BOOKS, TOTE BAGS, T-SHIRTS, PHOTOS & MUCH MORE.

February Board Notes

Treasurer reported net income for January was \$4851.85; PAPHAs assets/liabilities, \$45,474.19.

Band Concert netted \$735. The concert will be an annual event with plans to hold 2010 concert in the High School gym if possible. Gift shop sales were \$254 in January.

Rick Pratt gave briefing on museum operations, and submitted proposal to Board offering his services as museum director at salary of \$6000 per year. Board discussed and accepted his offer.

Board officers elected: president – Nancy Phillips; vice president – Sharon Stricker; secretary – John Fucik; treasurer – Bruce Reynolds.

PAPHA will host Tropical Trails commission in May and a workshop on getting WWII oral histories in August.



Sweet sound reminiscing

Photo by Judy Cole

Band alumni are, kneeling, from left, Veril Barr, Vanessa Nesloney, Lela Caldwell, Leslie Willey Jr., Ben Brundrett and, top row, from left, Marilee McFadden, Shari Cole, Garry Truax, Dana Jensen, Nona Hendricks, Vivi See, Nancy Teller, Barry Truax, Tiffany Brown, Dillon Stowe and Mary Jo Matthews.

Band Members Reunite

A benefit concert last month at the Port Aransas Civic Center was so successful, it was decided to make it an annual event. The fundraiser for the Port Aransas Preservation and Historical Association raised more than \$1,100.

More than 150 folks enjoyed an evening of music played by the Port Aransas High School Band and band alumni on Thursday, Jan. 29.

The alumni played with the current band at the end of the evening after band members performed several tunes.

The official town song of Port Aransas, "That's My Island," written by the late Patsy Jones, was the focal point that included band and alumni.

Band director Jim Cole led the group.

The "historic" concert will be an annual event. Any band alumni is invited to join in next year.



Deep Water Saloon

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Nineteenth Century Cookbook Not For Calorie Counters

BY JOHN FUCIK

While cleaning out 50 years of accumulated stuff from my older brother's California apartment I, not surprisingly, encountered numerous items of historical interest. Among them was Professor Eugene La Fayette's French or Paris Family Cook Book, circa 1885. It was published by the Paris Publishing Co., (Limited) – London, Chicago and New York- odd locations for a Paris company.

Besides the usual and unusual recipes of that age, the book has lots of advertisements for tonics, patent medicines, toilet articles, etc. which presumably underwrote the publishing costs. Ayer's Hair Vigor, Cathartic Pills, Sarsaparilla(it cures pimples and blotches among a myriad of other ills) and Cherry Pectoral being prominently featured on almost every page. The Dedication reads, "To the Women of America: Who are interested in the proper preparation and service of table necessities, and luxuries, this volume is respectfully dedicated by.....The Author".



Uncle Dollie PAPHA archives

On page 18 are listed the kitchen utensils needed to prepare fancy French dishes, to wit: "1st . a good stove or range with hot water reservoir; 2nd. Iron kettles, spiders, broiler, roasting or baking pan, etc.; 3rd. Porcelain-lined or brass kettle and stewpans; 4th .Wire basket for boiling potatoes, eggs, and for frying doughnuts, fritters, etc. in, placing them in the bottom of the basket and setting it in the boiling grease, and saves the trouble of taking them out with a fork."(...Martha Stewart lives!!!). The list goes on to seven categories, but it's quite obvious Cuisenart and Corel had not made the 1885 kitchen scene.

Pages 8-10 contain the directions for conducting a proper and successful dinner party either a la Victoria or a la Russe. In either case the author warns the hostess, "Never make excuses to your guests about the food you place before them, as it is positively impolite and entirely uncalled for. Never allow the dinner to drag." This is followed by the menu ... all 17 courses, beginning with clams, oysters and Napoleon or Roman punch and concluding with a fresh relay of finger bowls, water and napkins. And each course MUST be served separately with butlers clearing plates between each course. Maybe the dinner didn't drag, but I'd think the diners did after the 14th or 15th course.

As a pleasant little precaution in case the clams, wild pigeons, sweet breads or pickled oysters were not quite up to par, the author includes a chapter on the causes, treatments and cures for cholera. Kinda wonder how any of our ancestors ever made it out of the dining room!

Got Port A photos you can share? Call the museum at 361-749-3800.

Just Arrived!

Custom Designed Sterling Silver

Pendants

Replica of our Museum

\$39 each

Includes sterling silver chain

**Available in Port Aransas
Museum Gift Shop**

Festival Continued from Page 1 —

The parade route will start at the museum, 101 E. Brundrett, go east on Brundrett, north on Church, East on Oakes crossing Station St., north on Mercer, west on White crossing Station St., south on Alister to end at 101 E. Brundrett. The parade will go past the historical sites of Gibbs Cottages, the old Catholic Church, two old jail houses, old city hall, the old Alister house, the Mercer Cemetery, the old Studeman house, the old Farley house, the original post office and the first grocery store.

Sign up now for the parade by calling Festival Chairman Pam Greene at 361-443-4683 or by email at pamg@cityofportaransas.org; or just show up by 3:30p.m. at the museum, on the corner of Brundrett and Alister.

Signed up so far are golf carts, floats, boats, bicycles, trucks, feet and a few dogs. Animals are welcome; only not horses without poop bags.

Decorating is encouraged, the more outrageous the better! All are encouraged to show Port A can celebrate our town and it's inhabitants, businesses and visitors, even better than dressing up for Mardi Gras! What better reason to celebrate than being in Port A!

Tales will be told on the great new porch of the Community Center, on the porch of the new museum and in the courtyard of the Community Center and the Port Aransas Museum.

This will be a true community celebration, with loads of fun for all, so don't miss out.

The Lighthouse and the Migrating Islands

BY JOHN G. FORD

When I was a kid hanging around the Port Aransas docks I was told that the Lighthouse I saw was built to guide ships to and through the Aransas Pass. I remember that confused me. The Aransas Pass I was looking at lay some distance—later I found out a mile—south of the Lighthouse. Could the builder have been off that far? Of course not. I

will explain the light and pass misalignment after a synopsis of the Port “A” Lighthouse.

When Texas joined the Union (1845), the Feds recognized the Aransas Pass as the gateway to maritime commerce in South Texas. They also saw the need for a light to guide Gulf mariners to the pass. In 1856, work began on a brick light

tower that lined-up directly with the pass. The tower was on Harbor Island, precisely where it is today. The tower light, visible for sixteen miles, blinked on in July 1857.

The Civil War impacted the Lighthouse. To deprive its use to the Federals, Rebels tried to blow-up the tower in December 1862, but only damaged it (repaired in 1867). The Lighthouse complex (tower & buildings) then weathered ten hurricanes, but the eleventh, 1970 Celia, was quite destructive. Thankfully, Charles C. Butt “adopted” the complex a year later, thus saving this venerable coast icon for future generations.

When built, the Lighthouse was directly inline with the Aransas Pass. So which moved? It was the pass. Mustang Island was constantly eroding, and equally so, St. Joseph Island was accreting—building up—to the south...and remember the Aransas Pass is the space between these islands. This movement—engineers call migration—was stopped in 1888 by rock revetments, but far too late for the lighthouse to remain an accurate guide to the pass entrance.

Brick Pavers and Blocks

Leave your own mark on Port A. Brick Pavers and Blocks still are being sold to line the walkways to the museum. The pavers measure 4" x 8" and are engraved with 3 lines of 14 characters. The blocks measure 16" x 16" and are engraved with 14 lines of 30 characters. Call Betty Bundy at 361-749-3406 or email ggbun7@centurytel.net for a form.



Port Aransas ferries in 1930s

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Want to become involved?

PAPHA offers many opportunities: individuals, families & businesses can become members (see page 6); **donate for the online or silent auction** (see page 5); **be a docent** (see page 5); **help with Old Town Festival** (see page 3); **offer skill in any area** (leave message at 749-3800)



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